

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**GENDER REPRESENTATION IN EFL  
DISTANCE EDUCATION MATERIALS: ALPHA UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE'S YEAR I ENGLISH MODULES IN FOCUS**

**BY  
MESFIN HABTAMU**

**JUNE, 2006**

MESFIN  
HABTAMU



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**GENDER REPRESENTATION IN EFL**  
**DISTANCE EDUCATION MATERIALS: ALPHA UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE'S YEAR I ENGLISH MODULES IN FOCUS**

By  
**Mesfin Habtamu**

Approved By

Signature

Amanuel Gebru

[Handwritten Signature]

Advisor

Elizabeth Ayalew

[Handwritten Signature]

Examiner

Gezennaw Lemse

[Handwritten Signature]

Examiner

NOTE

## **Acknowledgements**

At first, I would like to express my great debt of gratitude to my advisor, Amanuel Gebru, Assistant professor of English Language Education, for his continuous comment to the successful completion of this project.

I would also like to appreciate Ato Hussen Eshetu at Alpha University College who allowed me to get access to the distance education modules.

I sincerely thank my friends at department of Foreign Languages and Literature who honestly cooperated and encouraged me during data collection.

I am greatly indebted to my mother, my father and all my family for their material support and moral encouragement through out my study

Above all, praise be to God who has done everything to me.

## Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate if the distance education modules of Alpha University College reveal any imbalance concerning gender representation. An attempt is also made to identify the possible causes of gender bias in the content of the modules. Besides, efforts are made to check the accessibility of gender fair alternatives.

The study employed the following research tools to achieve its objectives. First, content analysis of the distance education modules is made to investigate features of gender bias. Second, the subjects who produced and edited the modules are interviewed. In doing so, the study compiled further information and crosschecked the data generated through content analysis.

The summary of the data obtained through the above research tools indicates that there is a significant difference between male and female sex representation in both modules (i.e. intermediate writing skills and reading skills). It is also discovered that the module producer and editor have the awareness of gender-fair linguistic features. But, they seem to be negligent to convert existing wrong practices. On top of these, it is also observed that the sensitivity of the module producer and editor is not accompanied by appropriate practice.

# Table of Contents

	Page
Acknowledgments	
Abstract	
Table of Contents	
List of Tables	
<b>CHAPTER I</b>	
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	2
1.3 Objectives of the Study .....	4
1.4 Significance of the Study .....	4
1.5 Limitation of the Study .....	5
1.6 Delimitation of the Study .....	5
1.7 Definition of Terms .....	6
<b>CHAPTER II</b>	
<b>2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE</b>	
2.1 What is Distance Education? .....	7
2.2 The Advantages of Distance Education .....	8
2.3 Women and Distance Education .....	9
2.4 Female Education .....	10
2.5 Gender and Educational Materials .....	12
2.6 Forms of Gender Bias in EFL Educational Materials.....	15
2.6.1 Stereotyping .....	15
2.6.2 Invisibility .....	17
2.6.3 Sexism .....	19
2.6.4 Attribution .....	21
2.6.5 Degradation and Disempowerment .....	22
2.6.6 Images/Illustrations .....	23

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In recent times, instructional approaches are becoming more learner-centered which are meaningful from the learner's perspective (McCombs, 2000). In the past, however, most instructors followed a "transmission" or lecture style approach to teaching. Overtime, more instructional diversity is occurring among teachers who are trying a larger variety of approaches (Eckert, 2003). A pedagogical shift is likewise occurring within distance education moving from a transmission model to a mode of education which emphasize on students' responsibility for their own learning (Rumble, 2001; Miller, 2001).

Stated differently, distance education is a form of education which focuses on the student as consumer, on flexibility and global reach (Rumble, 2001). It is also an independent or self-study or an institutional kind of educational system in which the teaching behaviours are quasi-permanently separated from the learning behaviours (Wedemyer, 1977; Dohmen, 1977 Cited in Koul, 1999).

The feminist movement, therefore, has an obvious message to the need of serious precaution in language use of educational materials, as women are becoming more and more critical of the male language structure. In relation to this, Sunderland (1994) states that the primary concern of English language should be inculcating fairer gender treatment in language use. The practicality of such gender balance should, therefore, be ensured in language education materials such as distance education print materials. This is mainly because distance education works in a much larger situation in which many factors remain indeterminate (Koul, 1999). This scholar further explains that distance education lays emphasis on the needs and convenience of the learners taking

into account the individual diversity among them. The implication of such concept of distance education facilitates its operation to fulfill the needs of the learners, of which gender issues should be part and parcel. Hence, with its operative condition, distance education materials should be good models to promote gender-fair language use. In addition, women's rising interest in all possible meanings of what is just said and their increase in number to join the academic community call for a significant reform in language use (Frank and Treichler, 1988).

Moreover, Leard (1988) indicated that stereotyped attitudes and assumptions that reinforce the superiority of one sex over the other are in no way acceptable in language teaching. This is because as Sunderland (1992) in Whiteny (1992: 86) explains gender-bias can affect learners both by de-motivating them as a student and by denying him/her some linguistic input necessary for communicative competence as a language user. Thus, gender balance is identified as an important ingredient of efforts done to improve women's status and provide them with equal opportunity in education (Atkins et al, 1995).

In the light of the recent changes in the awareness of our target learners, therefore, it is time to figure out how gender-bias in our writing can offend our readers. It is also the right time to work out some specific strategies that can help one to handle the problem (Procter, 2001).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The effect of the gender discriminating practice between male and female students in the educational process not only restrict females' participation and performance in schools, but also limits the levels, types and areas they participate in the educational system as well as in the society. This problem, therefore, should not only be considered as an obstacle for female

advancement, but also as an impediment to the progress of society (Okoye, 1987; Prather and Balouch, 1996).

United Nations Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, particularly on education is written under "Article 10". It reads, "States parties shall take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure on the basis of equality of men and women."

One of the actions to be taken by this international convention reads:

*The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging co-education and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and in particular by the revision of textbooks and school programs and the adaptation of teaching methods.*

Recent ELT research also states that the written materials such as dictionaries, grammar books and even versions of the Bible were subjected to revision in order to avoid gender bias in their content. Besides, studies of the portrayal of women as mothers and house makers are still being perpetuated in many current language textbooks (Ansary and Babii, 2003; Hartman and Judd, 1987). Thus, a large number of studies has now been done into gender bias in language textbook, especially in English as Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks (e.g. Rees-Parnell, 1976; Hartman and Judd, 1978; Hellinger, 1980). Yet, the results have been depressing: gender bias is rife in terms of both relative visibility and occupational and personal stereotyping of female characters.

Similarly, in Ethiopia, there are few studies of gender bias in textbooks. Of the few, groups under MOE constituting study team and analysts did the first gender bias analysis. The study was carried out in 1989 on primary school (1-8) textbooks on the trial of general polytechnic education. The analysis was done

on 53 textbooks for 12 subjects. It was done by subject experts on topics, language, activities, characters, occupations and examples. It was found that all were generally biased toward males; pictorial content was also male biased (Muluaem, 1998). In addition, local researchers like Medhin, Zewdu, Muluaem etc. have done studies on the issue in question. To the researcher's knowledge, however, gender issues specifically in distance education print materials seem unaddressed in Ethiopian private higher institutions. Therefore, this study will investigate the representation of gender in EFL distance education print materials; modules prepared for first year English major students at Alpha University College in focus.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to analyze the content of the modules prepared for first year English major students to investigate features of gender bias. More specifically, the study will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. How are men and women represented in the modules?
2. Are there gender-stereotyped messages in the modules? (If any)
3. What are the causes of gender bias in the modules? (If any)
4. Do the modules' writers and editors have access to gender-fair alternatives?
5. Have the modules writers and editors taken training in gender-fair use of language in EFL materials? (If any)

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The study is significant more importantly for distance education module producers and editors to implement corrective actions during preparation of modules. It may also create awareness and serve as input for textbook

writers and other concerned bodies for gender fair representation of materials. Besides, the study may provide various authors with information on the implementation of gender balance in their genres so that material writers and editors can have access to select gender fair texts for the materials they prepare. Apart from this, the findings of this study may also indicate some information as to what to do with the issue in question. Finally, it may be used as a baseline for further studies.

### **1.5 Limitation of the Study**

MOE has prepared categories for analyzing textbooks (see chapter three for details) in light of gender-referenced messages. But, the writer believes that they are not exhaustive. Due to financial and time constraints, additional and detailed categories are not included.

The interviewees who participated in preparing and editing the modules are three. But, one of the interviewees, an editor, was not willing to be included in the study. Hence, this study is limited to conducting interviews with only two of them, a producer and an editor.

### **1.6 Delimitation of the Study**

The scope of this study is limited to first year English majors' distance education modules of Alpha University College. The other levels and departments of the college are excluded after lots are drawn. The study is also set to be in College of Distance Studies of Alpha University College because it emerged out as the first private institution in Ethiopia to offer various programs for different levels through distance mode of delivery. In addition, it has developed a great deal of popularity and positive image among the public and stakeholders as well.

Apart from this, the study did not include syllabuses, teachers guide and other related materials. The various ideologies of feminist movements are not also treated in review of related literature because the writer believes that these issues are the basis, but would be beyond the scope.

### **1.7 Definition of Terms**

1. Gender- Gender is understood and often used interchangeably with sex. It is a socially imposed dichotomy of masculine and feminine roles and character traits. It is culturally coding individuals as male or female across diverse situations (Frank and Treichler, 1988:13). Sex and gender are interchangeably used in this paper.
2. Gender issues- needs, problems and concerns brought about in the distinction of perceptions and roles between men and women. They appear in all components of development including land, capital, labour, technology, education, health and many aspects of life (Almaz, 1995:20).
3. Gender-bias-Haswell and Haswell (1995) define it as preconceptions about gender that based upon cultural practices.  
Gender-bias, sex bias, gender stereotype and sex stereotype are used interchangeably.
4. Gender-fair Language-refers to non-gender offensive or gender neutral language use.
5. Stereotype- A fixed idea or image that many people have of a particular type of person or thing but which is often not true in reality.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

In this section, issues related to distance education and its advantages, women and distance education, gender and educational materials, forms of bias in such materials, causes and consequences or impacts of gender bias and gender-fair alternatives are discussed in some detail.

#### **2.1 What is Distance Education?**

Depending on their dispositions, various scholars in the field have defined distance education differently. Aster (1998) quoted Flinch (1978) to define distance education as follows. It is a learning system where the teaching behaviours are separated from the learning behaviours. The learners work alone or in groups guided by study material. They, however, have the opportunity to communicate with tutor/tutors with the aid of one or more media such as correspondence, telephone, television or radio. It may also be combined with various forms of face-to-face meetings. Here, it is quite important to note that print is the foundation of distance education and the basis from which all other delivery systems have evolved. The first distance delivered courses were offered by correspondence study, with print materials sent and returned to study by mail. More importantly, print continues to be a significant component of all distance education programs (Black, 1992 cited in Koul., 1999).

Peter (1973) cited in Aster (1998) also defined distance education as a method of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes which makes it possible to instruct great numbers of students at the same time wherever they live. It is an industrialized form of teaching and learning.

After a thorough analysis of various definitions of distance education, Keegan (1983:30) cited in Koul (1999) listed the following as principal elements in defining distance education.

- The separation of teacher and learner which distinguishes it from face- to-face lecturing.
- The influence of an educational organization which distinguishes it from private study.
- The use of technical media, usually print to unite teacher and learner and carry the educational content.
- The provision of two way communication so that students may benefit from or even initiate dialogue
- The participation in an industrialized form of education which, if accepted, contains the genus of radical separation of distance education from other forms with in the education spectrum.

## **2.2 The Advantages of Distance Education**

Distance education helps not only in extending education but also in equalizing educational opportunities. It can carry education to varied and dispersed student populations, even in remote rural areas, and it can provide instruction at all levels (Aster, 1998). It also opens doors to those who are disadvantaged in the face of traditional education. This is because it has made it possible for students to adjust and schedule their time to learn and study while at the same time fulfilling other duties and responsibilities (Jenkins cited in Perraton and Lentell, 2004).

The experience of institutions in many parts of the world confirms that 90 percent of distance students are in full-time employment and up to 70 percent married. This number highlights the flexibility and convenience of distance education for adult students of these kinds. On this account, distance

## **2.4 Female Education**

Females constitute half of the population both at international and national level (Muluaem, 1998). In Ethiopia in both traditional and modern education females have generally been denied access to education as compared to males. Overtime, educational opportunities have been improved and the participation and enrollment of females has increased (Muluaem, 1998). More women than men now enroll in college, a trend supported by the fact that more women are entering the work force (Lifelong, 2002). But it has been found out that the participation rate of females' decreases as the educational level increases (Atsede, 1996:8).

What is important, it seems there is a realization in Ethiopia that educating females is educating the society. On this account, Mak (1996:83) states that educating girls yields social benefits such as reducing birth rate, maternal and child mortality, spread of AIDS and increasing environmental benefits. It encourages decision making within and outside family. It helps to bring additional income for the family. According to UNESCO's (1979) and World Bank's (1995) reports, in most countries females' participation in education at all levels is low compared to that of males. In higher educational institutions, females constitute only one-third of the whole student population.

Discrimination against women and girls is not, however, only an issue prevalent in countries like Ethiopia. It is also practiced in highly advanced countries like USA. For instance, the National Committee on Pay Equity (1992:129) confirms that in USA women are discriminated in different jobs. It seems that certain occupations are assigned to males while others are to females. To alleviate this problem of discrimination and gender-biased messages, education is believed to be critical. Besides, as it was indicated in the Fourth World Conference of Women held in 1995 in Beijing, measures were

identified to improve women's education in terms of access, content, retention and participation at all levels (Stromquist, 1996:422).

Even though different forms of discrimination against women are still perpetuated, efforts are being exerted and due attention is given to women issues in education. Among such efforts, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) offers 14 strategic actions. One of the issues is eliminating sexism and other forms of discrimination from educational process and the messages conveyed by education (ibid, 417-418).

In Latin America, as Stromquist (1996:422) explains a project is conducted to implement non-sexist education. It suggested decisive actions to bring about equity in education as a whole. These are:

1. promote the creation of opportunities for boys and girls to discuss in critical and creative ways the sex-gender system and its consequences on social and work life;
2. make gender issues more visible in educational environments;
3. support processes by which teachers discuss sexual discrimination and fragmentation and identify social opportunities for both genders;
4. eliminate the sexist features of curricula and educational materials;
5. incorporate into the curriculum the contribution of women to the development of culture and society;
6. promote the analysis and revision of programs that train women to the labor force to eliminate all forms of discrimination and segmentation;
7. sensitized and train teachers to eliminate sexist practices and to improve their performance to attain an effective equality between women and men in the educational process; and
8. incorporate in teacher training curricula the themes of gender and equal opportunity for men and women.

Generally, gender bias and discrimination has existed for centuries. Governments and organizations have formulated policies and projects to alleviate this problem. They also have undertaken arduous activities to bring gender issues to the circle of attention. Nevertheless, Tomesevesk (1993) and Stromquist (1996) complain that changes have not taken place as much as expected. This in turn implies that too many efforts need to be put to improve the situation with the issue in question. The researcher of this paper also shares the firm view of the aforementioned scholars in eliminating any form of gender bias from every sector of the society.

## **2.5 Gender and Educational Materials**

A number of studies have indicated that educational materials frequently have reflected sexual stereotypes and those materials have played a part in generating and maintaining disadvantages that girls and women experience in schools and society (Keating, 1990 cited in Levine and Havighurst, 1992:423).

Research also reveals that some educational materials ascribe more importance, representation, focus etc., to either sex. Some others may not. What needs to be considered, however, is that such materials need to represent both the female and male genders in a balanced way. This is because sex-fair materials broaden students' attitudes about gender roles, and increases the motivation to learn (Schau and Scott, 1984; Sadker and Klein cited in Levine and Havighurst, 1992). It has also been argued by some researchers such as Porreca (1984:709) and Nielsen et al (1977:182) that in the English language females appear in more derogatory roles than males, and male generic language are more frequently used.

Scott and Schau (1985:224) reviewed the literature on instructional materials and reached at the following four general conclusions:

1. Sex- biased language distorts students' perception of reality.
2. Sex- equitable instructional materials can broaden attitudes about sex roles and also increase motivation to learn.
3. Sex- equitable instructional materials influence students' sex- role behaviors
4. Many instructional materials are sex-biased.

According to MOE (1989:6), the way the textual materials are written; their appearance, their content and the way they are arranged, and the illustrations all affect the quality of the books. But if textual materials are produced to arouse only shallow interest, students will be left with insufficient knowledge of the subjects. Apart from this, educational materials which are prepared to tailor the needs of learners should also reinforce motivation. It is one of the good qualities of textbooks and other educational materials to provide motivation towards learning. The reason is that motivation is cardinal in learning because it provides power (Farrent, 1964:92).

On the other hand, it is quite obvious that books and schools contribute much to the socialization process of girls and boys. Williams (1987:194-5) says "books and schools provide models for learners and instruct them how they ought to be and behave, informing them in countless ways, often indirectly, of the values of the society and of its expectations of them as females and males."

It is also known that a policy is in place that guarantees women's equality. However, there can be a gap between policy statements and practice. There can be constitutional guarantees for women's equal opportunity in education. But, if educational content discriminates against women by reinforcing sexual division of labor which restricts activities for women, attainment of their occupational goals is hindered. This condition discourages women from acquiring the necessary attitudes and skills (Tsion, 1990:45).

Some textbook writers may not recognize the aforementioned or other biased or stereotypical treatment of the sexes. Those that do not know it need to feel that textbook sexism hinders learning (Sunderland, 1994:62). Moreover, stereotypical representation of women in textbooks may alienate female learners. For this reason, educators and psychologists are very much concerned about the eradication of discriminating messages in learning and teaching materials. The education Commission of India quoted by Kalia (1988:233) writes the following:

*Each sex to develop a proper respect toward the other because ... it is unscientific to divide tasks and subjects on the basis of sex and to regard some of them as 'masculine' and others as 'feminine'. Similarly, the fact that the so-called psychological differences between the two sexes arise, not out of sex but out of social conditioning, will have to be made to realize that stereotypes of 'masculine' and 'feminine' personalities do more harm than good.*

In addition, several content analysis studies reveal that textbook messages are not free from sex stereotypes. Concerning this, Trecker (1971:251) concluded.

*... Texts omit many women of importance, while simultaneously minimizing legal, social and cultural disabilities which they faced. The authors tend to depict women in a passive role and to stress that their lives are determined by economic and political trends. Women are rarely shown fighting for anything; their rights have been 'given' to them.*

Kalia (1980:86-67) carried out content analysis of 41 Indian textbooks, of which 21 English and 20 Hindi languages. The majority of characters were male. In seventy per cent of the lesson men emerged as dominant figures. There were 47 biographies of men, and only 7 biographies of women. Over 100 female characters were victimized as a result of their sex roles. In most lessons, men ventured out to seek fame, fortune, while women stayed home to wash dishes and clothes. Males in Indian textbooks occupied high prestige occupation.

Rhyme cited in O'Donnell (1973:1068) conducted a study on printed materials and it was revealed that words referring to males occurred in higher frequency, boy or boys appearing 4, 700 times to 2,200 times for girl or girls and that the word *he* occurred three times more frequently than *she*.

The findings of analysis on reading series published during the sixties by 14 companies also indicated that boy-centered stories outnumbered girl-centered stories by the ratio of 2.5 to 1; adult male main characters outnumbered female adults by 3 to 1; and male biographies outnumbered female biographies by 6 to 1. In addition, boys were the main characters in 3 out of 4 stories having themes of ingenuity, industry, bravery, adventure and imaginative play. Girls were shown exhibiting passivity, dependence, and docility 6 times to every time for boys (central New Jersey National Organization of Women cited in Schnell, 1975:737).

## **2.6 Forms of Gender Bias in EFL Educational Materials**

The following forms or dimensions of bias can be used to evaluate instructional/ educational materials. They are commonly used to identify bias against women.

### **2.6.1 Stereotyping**

Sex stereotype is "the constellation of various traits, activities, values and behavioral characteristics attributed to and used to describe and differentiate two sex groups in a socio-psychological set up" (Das and Ghadically, 1988:124). Sadker and Sadker (1997: 245) state that stereotyping may occur in reference to any of a number of variables: physical appearance, intellectual attributes personality characteristics, career roles, domestic roles and social placement. They also identified the most frequently seen stereotypes in textbooks. Some of

these include the portrayal of women as passive, dependent persons defined in terms of their home and family roles. However, men are portrayed in a wide variety of occupational roles (and only occasionally as husband and fathers) and as strong, assertive persons defined primarily in terms of their work outside the home. Here, it is important to underscore that the sex group which is underrepresented, less represented or represented in a demeaning way may give less attention to the content and as a result learning may not be successful. Hence, conscious or unconscious, intentional or unintentional sex stereotyping needs to be avoided from any educational system.

Rothenberg (1992: 332) underlines that language plays a very important role in shaping the image of human beings. Sexist language develops wrong self image. Self image is the way people see themselves and the value they place on themselves (Walkin, 1982). Chasen as cited in Chasen (1974:222) explained that girls as well as boys believed that males were "smarter, stronger, fixed cars better, drove better, worked better ..." This illustrates that the self image of the boys was in general better than the girls' self image.

Besides, sexist language spreads and reinforces sex role stereotypes. Taylor (1973:1045) asserts that if textbooks are free from sex stereotypes, they are able to contribute to the building of self-confidence, identity, and a sense of self-worth in students. This is because, our opinions in any given matter are shaped by the way in which facts are presented to us (Kalia, 1988:235).

Similarly, Gershuny (1977: 143) states that stereotypes limit behaviour and understanding by constructing a static image of both sexes and also establishing a false impression of male and female characters as an alternative to their socio-cultural origins. In addition, stereotypes are viewed as socio-political hierarchies in which one sex is considered superior or dominant over the other inferior sex. Concerning this, Hartman and Judd (1978) demonstrated that women's stereotypical roles were related to housework and childcare.

Women's household chores were exemplified by cooking, changing diapers, doing laundry. On the contrary, men were depicted fixing the car, changing electrical bulbs and/or mowing the lawn.

Many EFL/ESL textbooks for young and mature learners researched by Gilbert and Rowe (1989) and Hartman and Judd (1978) also showed gender stereotypes in which women were generally given subordinate status because of their gender alone, and were treated as inferior without regard to their actual power or social status. Hence, EFL/ESL textbook writers need to be cautious in producing such materials because textbooks are one of the great influences in contributing to cultural prejudices and personal biases that learners can, unfortunately, absorb in their learning.

### ***2.6.2 Invisibility***

Perhaps the most fundamental form of bias in instructional materials is the complete or relative exclusion of a particular group or groups from representation or consideration in text narrative and/or illustrations (Sadker and Sadker, 1997: 244). Regardless of the origins of the textbooks, males are more visible in texts and visuals than females. For example, Gisnet (1988) found that in Israeli English textbooks, 89 per cent out of all children in pictures are boys. Overall, women constitute less than 33 percent of all the characters. Hellinger (1980) found that females are excluded from the titles of stories, and females appear in less than 10 percent of the titles of stories in English-language textbooks used in German schools. Moreover, Hartman and Judd (1978: 384-385) conducted a survey of several textbooks and found that women suffered from low visibility. They counted the sex-linked proper names, titles or non-generic pronouns and reported in their finding that, in most cases, male references outnumbered the female ones. For instance, the male-to-female ratio in US Teaching English as a Second or Other language (TESOL) material

was 63:37 (ibid). Nan (1992) also found that 82 out of 93 characters in mainland Chinese-Language textbooks were male.

A number of studies have found that female visibility has improved over recent decades. But still the genders remain imbalanced. For example, in their study of gender fairness in US high school chemistry textbooks, Blazer and Simons (1991) found that textbooks used in the 1990s included more females, unnamed characters, and unnamed youth characters in illustrations than those published in 1970s. Therefore, it can be deduced that textbook writers are gradually correcting gender bias.

Some researchers give another technical term for invisibility, i.e. omission. It has been indicated that females do not appear as often as males in the text as well as in the illustrations which serve to reinforce the text. Moreover, omission implies "women's accomplishments, or that they themselves as human beings, are not important enough to be included" (Porreca, 1984: 706). Many studies have indicated under representation of female sex. For instance, Coles (1977) examined five sets of popular adult basic education materials and found that in the total of 150 stories, men outnumbered women by a ratio of 3:1. Another researcher by name Hellinger (1980) also conducted a thorough study of 131 passages from three English language textbooks used in German schools. She found that men participated in over 93 per cent of the passages, while not even 30 per cent of the texts included women. She also found out that 80 per cent of the speakers were males.

However, counting how many times the genders appear merely provides little insight into how they are portrayed in texts. It is also necessary to take into account how genders are depicted in other dimensions or forms of bias.

Language is essentially a neutral vehicle of communication whereby a wide range of attitudes and values are conveyed. However, all speakers tend to create flattering language which is useful to them. Besides, standardized usage of language has been determined by those with enough power, authority and influence. Thus, certain sexist uses of English, which are by no means obligatory, were accepted as normal and standard (Porreca, 1984).

Apart from this, researchers in the field have tried to find out specific ways in which sexist attitudes are conveyed through the language in educational materials. An important component in this respect is firstness. Porreca (1984: 706) defined firstness as "given two nouns paired for sex, such as male/female, the masculine word always came first, with the exception of the pair ladies/gentlemen". "It reinforces the second place status of women and could, with only a little effort, be avoided by mixing the order" (Hartman and Judd, 1978: 390 cited in Porreca, 1984: 706).

Occupational and family roles are also commonly prevalent reflections of sexism in instructional materials. Gerrity (1978) in Porreca (1984: 706) found "men were portrayed in four times as many paying occupations as women..."

There are two dimensions of occupational roles identified by researchers. They are horizontal and vertical. The former refers to the range of occupations that both genders occupy. The latter refers to the rank of the occupations, for example, bank managers belong to a higher rank than bank tellers.

Previous studies show females in fewer occupations than males. Gisnet (1988: 65) analyzed an Israeli English textbook, *Here We Are*, and found "the roles fulfilled by women include mother, grandmother, kiosk worker, singer, cook, secretary, fortune teller, laundry clerk, reporter, and traffic police women who is frightened by the traffic." Males, however, are "doctor, owner of a large

department store, film producer, salesman, truck driver, fireman, detective, acrobat, clown, and soldier" (ibid).

Cole's (1977) study of adult basic education materials revealed that 39 of the total 61 females were engaged in only 11 occupations, and 19 of those 39 females worked as housewives. By contrast, 106 out of 192 males had 73 different occupations, ranging from truck driving to medicine. By and large, "women managed little and owned nothing; on the other hand, men, while holding a large number of unskilled jobs, were the predominant occupants of skilled, managerial, and ownership positions presented in the stories" (ibid: 42). Not only do fewer females work than do males, but females also work in fewer occupations. Stereotypical occupations are assigned to both genders. Hence, we have yet to see a female president, truck driver, or fireman, or to see a male secretary in our EFL instructional materials.

Apart from occupational roles, family roles have also been frequently studied. Females are more likely to be restricted to the kitchen than males (Byrne, 1978; Gaff, 1978) and more likely to be found at home (Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 1992). Often, females are assigned, fixed and settled domestic tasks such as cooking, baking, cleaning, polishing, mending, sewing and washing, while males do the painting, gardening, repairing, and taking out the garbage (Hartman and Judd, 1978)

#### **2.6.4 Attribution**

Pervious studies have examined attributions assigned to textbook characters. Many textbooks gave boys more physical strength and mental qualities than girls. In Israeli English textbooks, females are portrayed as "unintelligent, careless, incompetent and gossipy" (Gisnet, 1988:65).

In a study by Hellinger (1980) in German English language textbooks, females showed typical "female" behaviors: emotionality, passivity, and limited intellectual ability. In US TESOL materials, females are over emotional, easily angered, spend too much time talking on the phone and getting dressed, and easily convinced that their goal is to find a wealthy husband (Hartman and Judd, 1978).

### ***2.6.5 Degradation and Disempowerment***

Degradation and disempowerment are also vital dimensions addressed in examining instructional materials. Degradation refers to making the characters look worthless, such as making them the butt of jokes. Disempowerment refers to withdrawing power and status from characters by failing to acknowledge their worth or contribution (Sunderland, 1994).

Hartman and Judd (1978) found that girls are frequently the butt of offensive jokes such as: like a woman, it (the weather) is very changeable and never underestimate a woman if you are not talking about her weight or age. In most German English language teaching textbooks, the "presence of intellectual or other achievements of women is ignored, downgraded or described as exceptional." (Hellinger 1980:273).

Trecker (1971) cited in Commeyras and Alvermann (1966:34) explains, "Texts omit many women of importance, while simultaneously minimizing the legal, social and cultural disabilities which they faced. The authors tend to depict women in a passive role and to stress that their lives are determined by economic and political trends."

### **2.6.6 Images/Illustrations**

Images are not only used to support written text but to express meaning on their own as well.

Concerning this Glaschi (2000:36) states:

*The analysis of images addresses the use of poststructuralist analytical techniques in deconstructing universal truths. The image per se would seem to be the perfect instrument for an enlightenment dogma, difficult to disintegrate, difficult to challenge on a rational basis; we are forced when analyzing an image, to discuss feelings and impressions rather than point and counterpoint, and this talent quality is the image's communicative strength.*

Researchers such as Berger (1972) evaluated the gender positioning of images in textbooks. Glaschi (2000:33) termed positioning "individuals or groups of individuals are positioned by discourse as inherently inferior, in control, weak, strong and so forth". For instance, Berger's (1972) study on gender positioning of image in textbooks and found women as objects to be owned and men as objects of jealousy.

Scholars underscored that, in the last two decades, publishers have included more photographs, graphs and captions in textbooks, and are paying more attention to the visual presentation of the EFL/ESL textbooks, and are paying more attention to the visual presentation of the EFL/ESL textbooks in addition to their grammatical or textual content (Glaschi, 2000). However, a corpus of research findings indicated that illustrations reflected and reinforced a biased pattern. But photographs tended to portray females more realistically than drawings did (Porreca, 1978). In general, EFL instructional materials' writers should give due attention to the appropriate and non-offensive gender positioning of images in the materials they prepare.

### ***2.6.7 Fragmentation and Isolation***

According to Sadker and Sadker (1997), bias through fragmentation and isolation takes two primary forms. In the first place, content regarding women may be physically or visually fragmented or isolated and delivered only in separate chapters; ten women achievers in science, for example. Second, women may be described as interacting only with persons like themselves not with the majority culture.

In short, the implication of fragmentation and isolation is that the history, experience and situation of woman are somehow unrelated to those of the dominant culture. In addition, material writers also ignore the dynamic relationships of these groups to the development of our current society (ibid)

### **2.7 Causes of Gender Bias**

Several studies witnessed that gender bias in English can stem from three possible grounds. These are lack of awareness of the potential effect of a gender discriminating use, ignorance of gender fair equivalents of some gender discriminating uses, and lack of willingness to apply non-gender offensive forms of English during communication.

Among the scholars who share the above fact is Jordan-Henely (n.d.) who contends that in many instances gender bias is manifested due to reckless choice of items and role representation. Similarly, Jacobson (1995) underlines that in addition to lack of awareness to a gender biased form, underestimating its possible effect can also cause some one to uphold a wrong traditional use.

## 2.8. Impacts of Gender Bias

With regard to text comprehension and language teaching in general, gender bias in English has great negative effect. In the eyes of some scholars, gender bias is considered as an evil practice, for it is revealed in the learners. As a result, it limits learners' chance of exposure to the gender-neutral form (Leard, 1998).

Hence, Walsh (2003) contends that any bias in writing against special interest groups is known to offend, stereotype, belittle and exclude that group. Therefore, as Wolfson (1989:185) states "teachers and curriculum writers need to be aware of sexist usage and also of sexist bias in the materials..."

## 2.9 Gender-Fair Alternatives

Various scholars have suggested some points to be considered for equal treatment of the sexes. McGraw Hill Book Company (1975:725-726), for instance, has suggested:

*"Men and women should be treated primarily as people, and not primarily as members of opposite sexes. Their shared humanity and common attributes should be stressed, not their gender difference. Neither sex should be stereotyped or arbitrarily assigned to a leading or secondary role."*

Oliver (1974:256-258) by reviewing various literature writes how women and men should be treated by categorizing into different elements.

1. **Frequency of occurrence:** - women and men should be equally represented in the title, the central roles and illustrations.

2. **Personality or character traits:** - positive and desirable traits should be attributed to female characters as well as male. Cleverness, creativity, bravery, kindness, persistence, curiosity, adventurousness, achievement, self-respect and self-reliance should be found in women and girls as well as in men and boys.
3. **Interests and activities:** - as frequent as boys are active and adventurous, some girls should also be active. Girls should engage in various pursuits. Their interests and activities should not be only those typically ascribed to females-that is cooking, cleaning, saving, cleaning and doing crafts. Girls should not only follow, but they should lead.
4. **Profession or career options:** - women should not be shown as mothers, wives and teachers. They should be shown in various careers and professions.
5. **Physical appearance:** girls and women should be pictured in illustrations the way they look in life. All boys are not taller than girls, all mothers do not wear aprons, and all fathers do not smoke pipes.
6. **Role in the family:** - women and girls should be portrayed participating equally in family decisions. Father and boys should be shown participating in household chores.

To avoid occupational stereotyping, Sunderland (1994:60) mentions two alternatives:

1. By using a statistically accurate reflection of a society or the societies in which the target language is spoken. Thus, whatever proportion of management is female (and in Britain the figure was 27 percent in 1989), and whatever proportion is male, similar proportions of female and male managers would appear in a textbook.
2. Another theoretical alternative is to have as many women as men in each occupation in the textbook.

A list of gender-fair alternatives to be used in place of gender offensive forms has been formulated by Tiedt (1973:1073). He mentions the following example

to illustrate gender neutral forms; *“Every child makes his own dictionary in which he enters words from his stories.”*

**1. Change the Pronouns**

Write as: Every child makes an individual dictionary in which they enter words from their stories.

**2. change into plural forms (Pluralization )**

Write as: Children can make their own dictionaries in which they enter words from their stories

**3. Use couple or alternate choices**

Write as: Every child makes a dictionary in which he/she enters words form stories written

**4. Use the Passive form**

Write as: Dictionaries are made in which every child enters words form stories written.

With regard to gender fair alternatives for firstness, Pauwels (1991:57) states, “when describing a couple (women and men) treats both partners as equals.” In mentioning women and men together, do not always list the men first; try instead to alternate the order in which men and women are described.” Overall, as many scholars agree, the above gender fair alternatives are quite essential to equalize both the male and female genders in the education system.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **DESIGN AND METHOD OF THE STUDY**

#### **3.1 Subjects of the Study**

In order to achieve the objectives and to investigate the status and portrayal of females compared with males, the modules intermediate writing skills and reading skills are analyzed. Hence, the study includes these course units which are being used in distance education program of Alpha University College for first year English major students.

Alpha University College is one of the private higher institutions which are offering courses for distance education learners in Ethiopia. In doing so, it has opened college of distance studies to meet the growing demands of distance learners across the country. A leaflet prepared by the college explains that Alpha College of Distance Studies (ACDS) was established by a committed nationalist in 1981 with the major objective of offering vocational and technical training to those who had no opportunity to attend regular and extension classes for different reasons.

ACDS has carried out degree, diploma and certificate programs for the last two decades through distance mode of delivery. It has enrolled high number of students and offered educational services through its 10 branches and 52 representative offices through out Ethiopia. ACDS has also developed its own modules.

#### **3.2 Method of the Study**

The method used for this study is content analysis.

### **3.2.1 Content Analysis**

Many researchers adopted this method to analyze textbooks and other related written materials. This is because content analysis provides an objective and quantified description of how frequently selected social groups and attributes associated with them occur in the sampled educational materials. Occurrence is determined through the quantification of images (pictures, illustrations, photographs) and uses of language (words and phrases, characters etc). Besides, as Koul (1984) asserts content analysis of written materials are helpful for developing and modifying school curriculum at various stages.

In this case, therefore, the content of the distance education modules, intermediate writing skills and reading skills of Alpha University College for first year English major students is analyzed if it has represented gender fair or biased messages. Thus, for this analysis forms and categories are used.

#### ***Forms and Categories***

The most important issues in content analysis are categories. Koul (1984: 414) says that the researcher of content analysis should clearly indicate the categories and make provisions for marking the category in which each unit falls. In addition, Travers (1964:318) cited in Mulualem(1998) confirms that the categories should be appropriate to the problem under investigation. Apart from categories, Koul states that forms should be used carefully in order to get reliable and valid data.

For this study, the forms and categories used by MOE (1989) in the study entitled "Gender Analysis of Primary School Textbooks: In trial of General Polytechnic Education Curriculum in Ethiopia" are adapted. The forms and categories identified by MOE are, therefore, thought to be relevant to this study

by the writer because several studies reviewed in this literature have mentioned and used one or more than one categories which were identified and used by MOE. Besides, local researchers have adapted them before for analyzing textbooks.

Hence, the content analysis was done based on the following categories.

## **I. Written Contents**

1. *Topics and sub-topics*

2. *Language*

i. *proper names*

ii. *common nouns*

iii. *pronouns*

3. *Activities*

4. *Biographies and characters*

i. *biographies*

ii. *major characters*

iii. *minor characters*

5. *Occupations*

6. *Sex demeaning examples*

## **II. Illustrations (pictures)**

7. *Representation of human pictures*

8. *Activities in pictures*

In gender bias analysis, there are two techniques namely quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative analysis is "a statistical and comparative evaluation of the number of female and male characteristics feature in titles, texts, illustrations, exercises etc. Qualitative analysis is "a descriptive comparison of the character featured in titles, texts, illustrations, exercises, etc of textbook and other educational materials (Anbesu, 1995: 742) in Mulalem (1998). This

study is confined to quantitative techniques. Therefore, frequency counts are used in analysis of "concordance data" (Caroll and Kowitz, 1994: 79).

### **3.2.2 Interview**

The second tool used to elicit additional information was the interview with the modules' producer and editor. To this effect, they were interviewed to reflect their opinion, attitude, experience etc. concerning gender treatment in the distance education modules.

To compile pertinent information, some semi-structured interview items were recorded. As a result, the recorded information was transcribed for analysis. (see appendix D).

### **3.3 Sampling**

The researcher must analyses units which are representative of the total material which he/she is concerned with. Consequently, the results of samples can be generalized (Koul, 1984: 414). To take representative sample, lots were cast using four pieces of papers that have the titles of the modules prepared for first year English major students and to make random selections. Therefore, out of these modules 50 percent was selected as sample. Within the selected modules, written contents were analyzed in the study.

The research thus incorporated both aspects of purposive and random sampling techniques. It is purposive in that the producer and the editors who are involved in the preparation of the modules are included in the study. On the other hand, a random technique was employed in selection of the modules.

### 3.4 Procedures of the Study

In an attempt to make the content analysis and its interpretation sensible, the following procedures are used. Primarily, the forms and categories used by MOE (such as topics and sub-topics, language items, tasks/activities etc.) are analyzed. Afterwards, those categories referring to male and female genders are grouped as separate entities. Then, frequency counts are considered for the number of times each category occurs by using quantitative gender bias analysis technique. This in turn helps to check whether there is a statistically significant difference between male and female genders in the material.

Koul (1984: 414) states that recording instrument is imperative in content analysis studies. He further adds that formats are used in content analysis for classifying and recording purposes. Hence, formats were prepared to conduct this study for content and illustration.

#### 1. Contents

##### *Format 1: Topics and Sub-topics*

Topics and sub-topics are the major elements in format 1. They contain three items. Therefore, the writer tallied and counted the numbers of:

- *Topics and sub-topics with male reference.*
- *Topics and sub-topics with female reference.*
- *Topics and sub-topics with both sexes reference.*

##### *Format 2: Language*

Language is the main element in format 2. It has sub-elements such as proper names, common nouns and pronouns. Each sub-element contains three items. Thus, the writer tallied and counted:

- a. *proper names:- proper male names*
  - *proper female names*
- b. *common nouns:- male common nouns*
  - *female common nouns*
- c. *pronouns:- female pronouns*
  - *male pronouns*

#### *Format 3: Activities in the written content*

Here, the focus is on the activities which are assigned for each sex in the module. The writer listed all the activities for each sex in the module and tallied the number of times each activity is mentioned.

#### *Format 4: Biographies and Characters*

In this format, male and female biographies and characters were tallied and counted. In addition, major and minor characters were sorted. To do so, tally and counting were made for female and male major character and for male and female minor characters.

#### *Format 5: Occupations*

This format was used to list male and female referenced occupations in the modules. The writer grouped occupations by sex (male and female) and they were tallied and counted.

#### *Format 6: Demeaning Examples*

The purpose of this format is to identify sex demeaning examples that lower the respect, dignity and social esteem of both sexes (male and female).

## **2. Illustrations**

#### *Format 7: Picture Number Balance*

The main element in this format is number balance of human pictures. There are sub-elements which are tallied and counted. These are:

- a. *pictures with male (s) only*  
*pictures with female (s) only*  
*pictures with both sexes*
- b. *total number of female pictures*
- c. *total number of male pictures.*

#### *Format 8: Picture Activities*

The writer listed all activities for each sex depicted in the illustrations. Then tally and counting were made for the number of times the activities occurred for each sex.

### **3.5 Method of Data Analysis**

To collect data for the study, the writer tallied and counted on the basis of elements and sub-elements of each category. Afterwards, the counted tally marks are summed up and percentages are computed in accordance with each category in the format with respect to female and male sexes. The writer also needed an analyst (data collector) to count, tally and examine the modules under the study. This enables easy check-ups between the writer and the analyst (collector).

Later, a chi- square ( $X^2$ ) statistical test is used to check whether there is a statistically significant difference between the male and the female genders.

In conclusion, these are the techniques and tools employed to come out with all the basic data. Findings generated as a result of this have been discussed in the subsequent sections.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Results

##### 4.1.1 Content Analysis

As it has been explained in chapter three, content analysis was employed to examine the portrayal of male and female sexes in the modules of Alpha University College for first year English major students. The researcher and one analyst analyzed 50 percent of the modules on the given categories. To this effect, the elements and sub-elements of categories were counted separately in relation to items. Next, frequency counts of the elements and sub-elements of each category were added and converted into percentages. Finally, the frequency counts of categories were added and changed into percentages with respect to females and males.

Later, chi-square ( $X^2$ ) statistical test was used for each module to check whether there was a statistically significant difference between the female and male sexes. The frequencies and percentages of each category are presented in the following tables.

**Table 1: Gender Representation in year I Distance Education Modules**

Categories	Intermediate writing Skills				Reading Skills			
	M		F		M		F	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Topics and sub-topics	6	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
Language	638	62.4	385	37.6	491	51.9	455	48.1
Activities in written content	77	60.2	51	39.8	12	52.2	11	47.8
Biographies and characters	30	66.7	15	33.3	9	69.2	4	30.8
Occupations	128	69.9	55	30.1	34	56.7	26	43.3
Picture numbers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Picture activities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>63.5</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>52.4</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>47.6</b>

Table 1 indicates the representation of female and male sexes in year I modules in topics and subtopics, language, activities in written statements, biographies and characters, picture numbers and picture activities. The modules analyzed are intermediate writing skills and reading skills.

As can be seen from the table, the module intermediate writing skills does not represent females fairly i.e. it has gender referenced topics and sub-topics (hundred percent). With respect to language, male referenced messages (sixty-two point four percent) are represented more than female sex (thirty-seven point six percent). Similarly, regarding activities in the written content, males are overrepresented (sixty point two percent) as compared to females (thirty nine point eight). Concerning biographies and characters, more males are represented than females. As to occupations, gender referenced messages are also found, i.e., more males (sixty nine point nine) than females (thirty point one) are represented. It can also be seen that the module intermediate writing skills does not have gender referenced pictures and picture activities.

The module reading skills does not have sex-referenced messages with respect to topics and sub-topics, pictures and picture activities. There are slight differences as related to language and activities in written content. Hence, the representation of the sexes is almost balanced. But more biographies and characters are represented for male sex (sixty-nine point two) than their female counterparts (thirty point eight percent). Similarly, more occupations for male sex (fifty six point seven percent) are assigned than female sex (forty three point three percent). The general result shows that since the computed chi-square value ( $X^2 = 128.98$ ) is more than the critical chi-square value ( $X^2 = 0.05 = 21.026$ ) there is a statistically significant difference between male and female sex representation in both modules under study.

**Table 2: Gender Representation of Portrayed Activities in Written Contents of the Module 'Intermediate Writing Skills'**

No	Activities	Male		Female	
		f	%	f	%
1	Learning in classrooms	12	57.1	9	42.9
2	Teaching /Lecturing/	5	71.4	2	28.6
3	Architect activities	1	100	-	-
4	Delivering bills	1	100	-	-
5	Singing songs	2	33.3	4	66.7
6	Presidential campaigning	2	50	2	50
7	Begging	-	-	1	100
8	Running business	7	77.8	2	22.2
9	Sailing	2	100	-	-
10	Going on a trip/traveling/	6	35.3	11	64.7
11	Performing different sport activities	7	77.8	2	22.2
12	Feeding and bathing patients	-	-	1	100
13	Performing different domestic activities/household chores/	1	16.7	5	83.3
14	Arguing	-	-	3	100
15	Producing different writing materials	9	60	6	40
16	Conducting orchestra	1	100	-	-
17	Working as administrator	1	100	-	-
18	Painting	3	75	1	25
19	Gardening	3	100	-	-
20	Photographing	1	100	-	-
21	Experimenting in a laboratory	2	66.7	1	33.3
22	Praying	1	100	-	-
23	Hunting	2	100	-	-
24	Driving cars and machines	3	100	-	-
25	Healing patients	1	100	-	-
26	Farming	2	66.7	1	33.3
27	Wood carving	1	100	-	-
28	Typing	1	100	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>60.2</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>39.8</b>

Table 2 shows sex representation in activities mentioned in written contents of the module "Intermediate writing skills" included in the study. The data do not include activities in pictures. The activities mentioned in the module are

grouped under common activities. For instance, heavyweight boxing, fist fighting, etc, are grouped under performing different sport activities.

The total data in table 2 reveals that sixty point two percent of male sex is portrayed in twenty-eight different activities mentioned in the written content of the module. The calculated chi-square value ( $\chi^2=45.69$ ) is more than the critical chi-square value ( $\chi^2, 0.05= 40.113$ ). Therefore, there is a statistically significant difference between male and female sex representation.

However, this is the total representation. Women/girls are completely excluded from thirteen activities among the twenty-eight grouped activities. Among these activities in which women/girls are segregated, some of them are related to backward traditional outlook of the community. For example, those listed in the table like architect activities, working as administrator, hunting, driving cars and machines, etc, are traditionally restricted to men/boys.

Likewise, men/boys are less represented in an activity i.e. performing different domestic activities (household chores) which the society traditionally assigns only to women/ girls. Although the two sexes are assigned in certain activities the data indicates a big difference in the rate of representation. The activities are: teaching (lecturing) (only twenty-eight point six percent for female), running business (only twenty-two point two percent for females), painting (only twenty-five percent for male), performing different sports activities (only thirty-three percent for female), begging (hundred percent for female), sailing (hundred percent for male), and performing different household chores (only sixteen point seven for male). Almost all of these unbalanced representations seem to have relation to stereotyped outlook of the traditional society.

**Table 3: Gender Representation in Biographies and Characters Found in the Module 'Intermediate Writing Skills'**

	Male		Female	
	f	%	f	%
Biographies	1	50	1	50
Major characters	28	71.8	11	28.2
Minor characters	1	25	3	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>66.7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>33.3</b>

Biographies of a scientist and an author are found in the module. As shown in table 3, fifty percent representation of biographies for each (male and female) implies perfectly balanced representation. In stories, extracts, etc. including biographies seventy-one point eight percent of men/boys are depicted as major characters and twenty-five percent are shown as minor characters. Females have very high representation (seventy-five percent) as minor characters but they are less represented (twenty-eight point two) as major characters.

The computed chi-square value for biographies, major characters and minor characters ( $\chi^2 = 3.84$ ) is less than the critical chi-square value ( $\chi^2, 0.05 = 5.59$ ). Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference between female and male sex representation.

**Table4. Gender Representation of Portrayed Occupations in the module 'Intermediate Writing Skills'**

No	Occupations	Male		Female	
		f	%	f	%
1	Principal	2	100	-	-
2	Senator	3	60	2	40
3	Teacher/Lecturer	6	85.7	1	14.3
4	President	2	66.7	1	33.3
5	Student	22	56.4	17	43.6
6	Sportsman/woman	6	100	-	-
7	Scientist	2	50	2	50
8	Dancer	1	50	1	50
9	Businessman/woman	6	75	2	25
10	Film star	3	100	-	-
11	Pilot	2	100	-	-
12	Flight attendant	-	-	2	100
13	Sailor	1	100	-	-
14	Mayor	2	100	-	-
15	Governor	1	100	-	-
16	Household worker	1	16.7	5	83.3
17	Editor	1	100	-	-
18	Librarian	-	-	1	100
19	Singer	5	71.4	2	28.6
20	Nurse	-	-	1	100
21	Cook	1	100	-	-
22	Tourist	2	100	-	-
23	Conductor	3	100	-	-
24	Author	25	67.6	12	32.4
25	Anthropologist	-	-	1	100
26	Hospital Administrator	1	100	-	-

27	Fashion Designer	1	100	-	-
28	Painter	3	75	1	25
29	Architect	1	100	-	-
30	Photographer	1	100	-	-
31	Psychologist	4	100	-	-
32	Engineer	1	100	-	-
33	Botanist	1	50	1	50
34	Economist	1	100	-	-
35	Gardener	2	100	-	-
36	Driver	1	100	-	-
37	Healer	1	100	-	-
38	Farmer/Harvester	4	66.7	2	33.3
39	Soldier	1	100	-	-
40	Chemist	1	100	-	-
41	Newspaper columnist	1	100	-	-
42	Political Activist	1	50	1	50
43	Foreign Minister	1	100	-	-
44	Astronomer	1	100	-	-
45	Hunter	1	100	-	-
46	Warrior	1	100	-	-
47	Telephonist	-	-	1	100
48	Wood Carver	1	100	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>69.6</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>30.4</b>

Table 4 indicates sex representation of occupations in the aforementioned module included in the study. The occupations displayed are grouped in forty-eight items. The total occupation shows uneven representation of female and male sexes. Men/boys are represented at higher rates (sixty-nine point six percent) than women/girls (thirty point four per cent). The calculated chi-square value ( $\chi^2=144.78$ ) is more than the critical chi-square value ( $\chi^2, 0.05 =$

**Table4. Gender Representation of Portrayed Occupations in the module 'Intermediate Writing Skills'**

No	Occupations	Male		Female	
		f	%	f	%
1	Principal	2	100	-	-
2	Senator	3	60	2	40
3	Teacher/Lecturer	6	85.7	1	14.3
4	President	2	66.7	1	33.3
5	Student	22	56.4	17	43.6
6	Sportsman/woman	6	100	-	-
7	Scientist	2	50	2	50
8	Dancer	1	50	1	50
9	Businessman/woman	6	75	2	25
10	Film star	3	100	-	-
11	Pilot	2	100	-	-
12	Flight attendant	-	-	2	100
13	Sailor	1	100	-	-
14	Mayor	2	100	-	-
15	Governor	1	100	-	-
16	Household worker	1	16.7	5	83.3
17	Editor	1	100	-	-
18	Librarian	-	-	1	100
19	Singer	5	71.4	2	28.6
20	Nurse	-	-	1	100
21	Cook	1	100	-	-
22	Tourist	2	100	-	-
23	Conductor	3	100	-	-
24	Author	25	67.6	12	32.4
25	Anthropologist	-	-	1	100
26	Hospital Administrator	1	100	-	-

64). Hence, there is a statistically significant difference between the two sexes representation for the above occupations.

Among the forty-eight occupations listed in table 4, women/girls are excluded from more than half of the following occupations. These are principal, sportsman/woman, film star, pilot, sailor, mayor, governor, editor, cook, tourist, conductor, hospital administrator, fashion designer, architect, photographer, psychologist, engineer, economist, gardener, driver, healer, soldier, chemist, newspaper columnist, foreign minister, astronomer, hunter, warrior and wood carver. Almost all of the aforementioned occupations are restricted only to men/boys in the traditional outlook which is still manifested in the module.

Similarly, as can be seen in table 4, men/boys are excluded in few occupations (flight attendant, librarian, nurse, anthropologist, and telephonist). Some of these are occupations which are traditionally assigned to women/girls. In the occupations in which both sexes are depicted, the higher representation is for men/boys. These unevenly distributed are teacher (lecturer), senator, president, student, businessman/woman, singer, author, painter and farmer (harvester). These are evidences that witness stereotypical representation.

**Table 5: Gender Representation of Portrayed Activities in Written Contents of the Module 'Reading Skills'**

No	Activities	Male		Female	
		f	%	f	%
1	Learning	3	75	1	25
2	Working in a factory	-	-	1	100
3	Running business	1	50	1	50
4	Performing different domestic activities/household chores/	-	-	2	100
5	Serving in a hotel	-	-	1	100
6	Photographing	1	100	-	-
7	Telling story	1	100	-	-
8	Researching	5	71.4	2	28.6
9	Experimenting	1	33.3	2	66.7
10	Driving	-	-	1	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>52.2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>47.8</b>

Table 5 indicates sex representation of activities mentioned in written contents of the module 'reading skills' included in the study. As that of the previous module 'Intermediate Writing Skills', the data in this module do not include activities in pictures. All the activities mentioned in the module are not written separately. They are rather grouped under common activities. For example, collecting firewoods and water, looking after younger brothers and sisters are grouped under performing different domestic activities (household chores).

The total data in table 5 indicates that fifty two point two percent of male sex is portrayed in ten different activities mentioned in the written contents of the module. The computed chi-square value ( $\chi^2 = 9.59$ ) is less than the critical chi-square value ( $\chi^2, 0.05 = 16.92$ ). Thus, there is no statistically significant difference between female and male sex representation.

But this is only the total representation. Men/boys are excluded from four of the activities among the ten grouped activities. Among these activities in which men/boys are segregated, two of them (performing different household chores

and serving in a hotel) are related to the traditional outlook of the society. But the other two in which men/boys are excluded (working in a factory and driving) are activities that the society traditionally restricts to men/boys. Similarly, women/girls are rejected in two of the activities (photographing and telling story).

In this module, women/girls are represented in more activities than men/boys. However, it is only in three of the activities that they are represented with positive image which the society traditionally assigned to be performed by men/boys. These are working in a factory (hundred percent) and experimenting (sixty six point seven percent) and running business (fifty percent). In another activity, a woman is represented as driving a car (hundred percent) which again the traditional society assigns to men/boys. Nevertheless, she is portrayed with another form of biased representation, i.e. driving carelessly.

Although the two sexes are assigned in certain activities, the rate of representation has a big difference. The activities are learning (only twenty-five percent for female) researching (only twenty-eight point six percent for female), and experimenting (only thirty three point three percent for male). The first two unbalanced representations seem to have relation to stereotyped outlook of the traditional society.

**Table 6 Gender Representations in Biographies and Characters Found in the Module 'Reading Skills'**

	Male		Female	
	f	%	f	%
Biographies	-	-	-	-
Major characters	4	57.1	3	42.9
Minor characters	5	83.3	1	16.7
Total	9	69.2	4	30.8

As shown in table 6, fifty-seven point one percent of men/boys are depicted as major characters and similarly eighty three point three percent are shown as minor characters. Forty-two point nine percent of women/girls are portrayed as major characters and sixteen point seven percent are depicted as minor characters. No biography of both sexes is found in the module.

The computed chi-square value for major characters and minor characters ( $X^2 = 1.04$ ) is less than the critical chi-square value ( $x^2, 0.05 = 3.84$ ). Thus, there is no statistically significant difference between female and male sex representation.

**Table 7: Gender Representation of Portrayed Occupations in the Module 'Reading Skills'**

No	Occupations	Male		Female	
		f	%	f	%
1	Linguist	1	100	-	-
2	Author	15	46.9	17	53.1
3	Factory Worker	-	-	1	100
4	Professor	1	100	-	-
5	Household Worker	-	-	1	100
6	Executive consultant	1	100	-	-
7	Film star	-	-	1	100
8	Crime prevention officer	1	100	-	-
9	Flight attendant	-	-	1	100
10	Journalist	5	100	-	-
11	Lawyer	1	100	-	-
12	Solider	1	100	-	-
13	Researcher	3	50	3	50
14	Scientist	1	33.3	2	66.7
15	President	2	100	-	-
16	Philosopher	2	100	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>56.7</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>43.3</b>

Table 7 indicates sex representation of occupations portrayed in the module 'reading skills' included in the study. The occupations are grouped in sixteen items. The representation of female and male sexes is uneven in the total

representation. Men/boys are represented at higher rates (fifty six point seven percent) than women/girls (forty three point three percent) are represented. The computed chi-square value for these data ( $X^2 = 18.72$ ) is less than the critical chi-square value ( $\chi^2, 0.05 = 25.00$ ). Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference between female and male sex representation for the above portrayed occupations in the module.

Among the sixteen listed occupations in table 7 women/girls are excluded from more than half of the occupations. These are: linguist, professor, executive consultant, crime prevention officer, journalist, lawyer, soldier, president and philosopher. All of these mentioned occupations seem to be restricted only to men/boys in the traditional outlook.

On the other hand, as shown in table 7 men/boys are excluded in few occupations. These are factory worker, household worker, film star and flight attendant (waitress). Among these occupations, two of them are traditionally assigned to women/girls. In those occupations in which both sexes are depicted, higher share is for men/boys. These unevenly distributed are linguist, professor, executive consultant, crime prevention officer, journalist, lawyer, soldier, president and philosopher. All these are evidences that indicate stereotypical representations.

#### ***4.1.2 Interview Response***

To compile more information and enhance the reliability of the data through content analysis, the study forwarded interview questions to the distance education modules' producer and editor. The data in this respect are generated through semi-structured interview items. (See appendix B and C). The total number of questions posed during each interview session was eleven and a producer and an editor took part in the interview. A transcript of the details of

the interview is found under appendix D. The content of the transcript is summarized as follows.

The first question was forwarded to each interviewee with a view of assessing their personal opinion. In other words, it assesses whether each interviewee considers entertaining the problem of gender bias in producing and editing the distance education modules. In response to this, one of the interviewees did not consider the issue in question at all where as the other explained his concern of the issue. The first informant reasoned out that his concern was designing adequate tasks but not taking the problem of gender bias into consideration while preparing the module. The other informant saw it as a problem that has to be managed by guarding against traditional outlooks from appearing in the module.

The interviewees were also asked to mention some features of gender bias in the distance education modules. In this respect, one of the informants mentioned that there is no any apparent type of gender bias in the material he wrote. The other informant, however, could not recall the features of gender bias that he corrected in the material.

Afterwards, the interviewees were asked to share any experience of gender bias in writing. Nevertheless, both the interviewees are unable to recall.

The fourth question was forwarded to obtain information concerning the interviewees' sensitivity. Accordingly, the first informant strongly believes that any material should be free from gender bias. The second informant saw it from the humanistic perspective. Thus, he stated that both sexes have to be represented in a balanced way as long as they are equal. The fifth question was posed to know whether gender biases in distance education modules have any considerable effect while students are studying the material. According to the first informant, gender biased material can give learners the impression that

what they read is acceptable. The other informant also agreed on the effect of such materials. He said if equality of women is not respected in materials the female students could be affected and may not actually follow up the equality principle.

Each interviewee was also asked to express his attitude towards inclusion or exclusion of gender issues in printed materials especially in distance education modules. Concerning this, both interviewees had positive attitude with different justifications. The first informant asserted that the inclusion of gender issues is necessary if they are intended to raise learner's awareness of gender-related problems and the consequent effects on the society. The other informant mentioned that the inclusion or exclusion of gender issues in materials should be left to individual material writers. He further explained that the selection of such issues should not be an imposition on the writer.

The next question was raised to get information regarding the main problems the interviewees encountered in producing the module as related to portrayal of the sexes. The first informant stated that he did not face any problem since he wrote the module with the skills (reading and writing) in mind not females and males under consideration. The second informant, however, could not recall a specific problem.

The eighth question was forwarded to check whether the interviewees have taken any training on gender issues or if they have participated in workshops, seminars etc. related to gender treatment in educational materials. Regarding this, it is only one of the interviewees who attended a workshop incidentally. He also underlines that he has read a lot of texts related to gender inequality.

The ninth question was asked to comment on the availability and accessibility of guidelines for gender fair use of English in distance education modules. The first informant gave no comment whereas the second commented that there are

no specific and very clear guidelines with regard to gender issues in material development in the college.

The tenth question asked the interviewees effort to portray male and female sexes in a balanced way. The first informant responded that he has never thought of this. He further said that what he was concerned with is the effectiveness of the tasks he uses. The other interviewee stated that scarcity of materials which represent both sexes fairly forces writers and editors to produce materials which exhibit disparity.

Finally, the modules producer and editor were asked to forward further comment concerning gender equality in distance education modules. Accordingly, the first informant suggested that including topics on gender in such materials can enhance learner's awareness of gender equality. The other informant, however, indicated that he is against the relevance of researchers' interpretation of every job assignment in the family in terms of gender inequality.

## **4.2 Discussion**

The results of the content analysis indicate that relatively better sex treatment and representation is done on the module 'reading skills' than the module 'intermediate writing skills'. In the activities and occupations, women/girls and men/boys are portrayed stereotypically. Women/girls are excluded from activities and occupations which are traditionally restricted only to men/boys by the society. Similarly, men/boys are excluded from certain activities and occupations which are reserved only for women/girls by the society. In other activities and occupations in which both sexes are depicted the representation of male sex is higher than female sex.

As it is discussed above, better sex representation is done in the module 'reading skills.' In this module fair representation is done in language, activities in written content and occupations. Even though this is not the case in the other module, i.e. intermediate writing skills, the results are encouraging. In general, the cumulative result indicated that women/girls are less represented than men/boys in both modules.

The writer also conducted interviews with the module producer and editor to get some additional information about gender representation in the distance education modules. As related to this, the editor complained of the scarcity of reference materials that portray both sexes in a balanced way. In addition, the discussion of the writer with the producer and editor revealed that they are conscious about uneven sex treatment. However, they reflected a stereotyped attitude by stating that much weight has to be given to skills development not gender issues. Besides, they firmly believe that gender issues in materials are optional; they should never be an imposition on the writer.

Despite this, equal treatment of sexes in textbooks as one objective is written in the New Education and Training policy (1994:13). Policy is a general guide and obligatory. It has to be ensured by implementation. To attain the intended objectives, there is a need for effective and efficient practitioners; hence to produce acceptable textbooks. There has to be a well-trained competent writer because textbook writing demands experienced writing. Otherwise, the existence of sex-biased materials in the educational process implies a number of problems as it has been indicated in the review of related literature. Sex-biased language, for instance, distorts students' perception of reality. Moreover, if educational content reinforces sexual division of labor which restrict activities for either sex, the attainment of their occupational goals is hindered. This in turn discourages them (especially women) from acquiring the necessary attitudes and skills.

In short, sexism and other forms of bias in educational materials hinder learning by alienating learners (mostly females) from the educational process. Furthermore, it limits behaviour and understanding by constructing a static image and establishing a false impression of males and females. EFL material writers and editors, therefore, need to be cautious in producing materials which give subordinate status without regard to the actual power and social status of the sexes.

Most importantly, as Sunderland (1994:64) underlines teachers, school directors and other workers in schools should be aware of balanced practical treatment of girls and boys.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following conclusions may be made.

The cumulative result for both modules shows that there is a significant difference between male and female sex representation. Among the two modules, reading skills has relatively better gender representation and sex treatment. In general, the results of both modules indicate encouraging gender representation.

In the twenty-eight grouped activities in written contents of intermediate writing skills, significant difference between female and male representations is found. Gender representation of portrayed activities in written contents of the module reading skills, however, revealed that there is no statistically significant difference. In both modules, women/ girls are excluded in activities like hunting, architect activities, working as administrator, photographing etc. Men/boys are also excluded in activities like performing different household chores, serving in a hotel etc. In those activities in which both sexes are depicted, men/boys are shown more visibly than women/girls.

As related to biographies and characters, a perfectly balanced representation is portrayed in intermediate writing skills module. Nevertheless, these categories are absent in the reading skills module. Among the 48 occupations portrayed in the intermediate writing skills module, women/girls are excluded from more than half of the occupations like governor, mayor, engineer, economist, soldier etc. Contrariwise, men/boys are excluded in few occupations like telephonist,

nurse, flight attendant etc. The study also discovered 16 occupations in the reading skills module. Here again, women/girls are excluded from more than half of the occupations as opposed to men/boys. Professor, crime prevention officer, lawyer, president etc are some of the occupations in which women/girls are excluded and household worker, film star, flight attendant etc. are those occupations that men/boys are excluded. Almost all of these occupations are traditionally reserved for either of the sexes and they are indeed stereotypical representations. Sex demeaning messages, however, are not found in the analyzed modules.

By and large, it is beyond dispute that those biased messages can cause marginalization of the sexes in the educational process. This can result in immediate negative consequences in both sexes in particular and in the society in general. More importantly, practitioners (in this case module producers and editors) should produce acceptable educational materials for equal treatment of both sexes as written in the New Education and Training Policy.

The study also discovered that there is negligence on the part of the module producer and editor to reinforce existing wrong practices of gender. The responses to the interview are evidences in this respect. A closer scrutiny upon the data seems to show that the ground for gender bias in the modules is due to two reasons. The first one is lack of willingness to apply non-gender offensive forms of English. Second, it is failure to see the offensiveness of certain biases. What is important, however, is that the module producer and editor have the awareness of the potential effects of gender discriminating uses and gender fair equivalents of some gender discriminating uses.

Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the module producer and editor are sensitive, but did not translate their sensitivity in to practice. Thus, the imbalance in gender representation in the modules has a serious implication. That is, unless it is properly addressed in time any form of bias against special

interest groups in educational materials offend, stereotype, belittle and exclude that group (Walsh, 2003).

## **5.2 Recommendations**

In light of the findings and conclusions discussed so far, the following recommendations may be made.

1. The level of gender sensitivity especially among the educated is increasing. Therefore, material writers and editors have to avoid sticking to the traditional gender offensive features of language. They should reconsider recent gender outlooks open-mindedly. Hence, they should take caution in their language use in materials they produce.
2. Material writers and editors should also put effort to induce discussion on gender-related issues. To this effect, they should keep in touch with recent developments and new insights through reading different genres. As a result, they can raise their awareness and that of their learners.
3. The college should carry out a training program to create and/or to update the awareness of all the teachers in general and the module producers and editors in particular. The college should also abundantly provide detailed and clear guidelines of gender fair use of English to module producers and editors. Consequently, it helps them to avoid including language features that taint the content of the modules in terms of gender. Furthermore, it is profitable to make them internalize gender-fair use of English to alleviate the problem.

## Bibliography

- Almaz Eshete. Women and Development Concepts. Issues and Evolution. **Gender and Development Workshop**. January 16 and 17, 1995 A.A.
- Ansary, H. and Babii, E. 2003. Subliminal Sexism in Current ESL/EFL Textbook. **Asian-EFL Journal**.
- Aster Tilahun, Teheyis Tibebu and Menna Bisrat. 1998. **The Role of Distance Education in Promoting Women Education**. Addis Ababa: Region 14 Education Bureau Educational Mass Media.
- Atkins, J. Hailom, B. and Nuru, M. 1995. **Skills Development Methodology**: A.A.U.
- Atsede Guta. 1995. Situation of Women in Ethiopia. **Gender and Development Workshop**, January 16 and 17 A.A.
- Berger, J. 1972. **Ways of Seeing**. London: Penguin.
- Blazer, J.A. and Simonis, D.A. 1991. Are High School Chemistry Textbooks Gender Fair? **Journal of Research in Science Teaching**, 28(4): 353-362.
- Byrne, E.M. 1978. **Women and Education**. London: Tavistock.
- Caroll, D. and Kowitz, J. 1994. Using Concordancing Techniques to Study Gender Stereotyping in ELT Textbooks, in Sunderland, J (ed.) **Exploring Gender: Questions and Implication for English Language Education**. London: Prentice Hall.
- Chasen, B. 1974. Sex Role Stereotyping and Pre-Kindergarten Teachers, **The Elementary School Journal**. Vol 74, No.4.
- Coles, G.S. 1977. Dick and Jane Grow up: Ideology in Adult Basic Education Readers. **Urban Education** 12 (1): 37-53.

## Appendices Appendix -A

**Calculation of the Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) statistics for the data in Table 1-7**

**Formula**

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum(O - e)^2}{e}$$

$$e = \frac{(\text{row total} \times \text{column total})}{\text{grand total}}$$

$$df = (\text{rows}-1) \times (\text{columns}-1)$$

O = observed value

e = expected value

**For the Data in Table 1**

O	e	$\frac{(O - e)^2}{e}$
6	2.17	6.74
-	1.25	1.25
-	1.35	1.35
-	1.23	1.23
638	713.12	7.91
385	410.51	1.59
491	442.96	5.21
455	402.39	6.88
77	54.69	9.10
51	31.48	12.10
12	33.97	14.21
11	30.86	12.78
30	21.01	3.85
15	12.09	0.69
9	13.05	1.26
4	11.85	5.20
128	88.01	18.17
55	50.67	0.37
34	54.67	7.81
26	49.67	11.27
<b>Total <math>x^2</math></b>		<b>128.96</b>

df = 12

Chi-square = 128.98

The distribution is significant

**For the Data in Table 2**

<b>O</b>	<b>e</b>	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
12	12.63	0.03
9	8.37	0.05
5	4.21	0.15
2	2.79	0.22
1	0.60	0.27
-	0.39	0.39
1	0.60	0.27
-	0.39	0.39
2	3.61	0.72
4	2.39	1.08
2	2.41	0.07
2	1.59	0.11
-	0.60	0.60
1	0.39	0.95
7	5.41	0.47
2	3.59	0.70
2	1.20	0.53
-	0.79	0.79
6	10.23	1.75
11	6.77	2.64
7	5.41	0.47
2	3.59	0.70
-	0.60	0.60
1	0.39	0.95
1	3.61	1.89
5	2.39	2.85
-	1.80	1.80
3	1.19	2.75
9	9.02	4.43

6	5.98	6.69
1	0.60	0.27
-	0.39	0.39
1	0.60	0.27
-	0.39	0.39
3	2.41	0.14
1	1.59	0.22
3	1.80	0.80
-	1.19	1.19
1	0.60	0.27
-	0.39	0.39
2	1.80	0.02
1	1.19	0.03
1	0.60	0.27
-	0.39	0.39
2	1.20	0.53
-	0.79	0.79
3	1.80	0.80
-	1.19	1.19
1	0.60	0.27
-	0.39	0.39
2	1.80	0.02
1	1.19	0.03
1	0.60	0.27
-	0.39	0.39
1	0.60	0.27
-	0.39	0.39
<b>Total X<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>45.69</b>

df= 27

Chi = square= 45.69

For significance at .05 level, chi-square should be greater than or equal to 40.113

The distribution is significant

**For the data in Table 3**

O	e	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
1	1.33	0.08
1	0.67	0.17
28	26	0.15
11	13	0.31
1	2.67	1.04
3	1.33	2.08
<b>Total X<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>3.84</b>

df = 2

chi -square = 3.84

for significance at 0.05 level, chi-square should be greater than or equal to 5.99  
the distribution is not significant.

**For the data in Table 4**

O	e	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
2	1.39	0.27
-	0.61	0.61
3	3.48	0.07
2	1.52	0.15
6	4.87	0.26
1	2.13	0.59
2	2.09	3.88
1	0.91	8.90
22	27.13	0.97
17	11.87	2.22
6	4.17	0.80
-	1.83	1.83

2	1.39	0.27
-	0.61	0.61
3	2.09	0.39
-	0.91	0.91
25	25.74	0.02
12	11.26	0.05
-	0.69	0.69
1	0.30	1.63
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
3	2.78	0.02
1	1.22	0.04
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
4	2.78	0.54
-	1.22	1.22
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
1	1.39	0.11
1	0.61	0.25
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
2	1.39	0.27
-	0.61	0.61
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30

1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
4	4.17	6.93
2	1.83	0.02
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
1	1.39	0.11
1	0.61	0.25
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
-	0.69	0.69
1	0.30	1.63
1	0.69	0.14
-	0.30	0.30
<b>Total X<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>144.78</b>

df= 47

Chi-square = 144.78

For significance at .05 level, chi-square should be greater than or equal to 64

The distribution is significant

**For the Data in Table 5**

O	e	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
3	2.09	0.39
1	1.91	0.44
-	0.52	0.52
1	0.48	0.57
1	1.04	0.002
1	0.96	0.002
-	1.04	1.04
2	0.96	1.14
-	0.53	0.53
1	0.48	0.57
1	0.52	0.44
-	0.48	0.48
1	0.52	0.44
-	0.48	0.48
5	3.65	0.49
2	3.35	0.54
1	1.57	0.20
2	1.43	0.22
-	0.52	0.52
1	0.48	0.57
<b>Total X<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>9.59</b>

df = 9

chi-square = 9.59

For significance at the .05 level, chi-square should be greater than or equal to 16.92.

The distribution is not significant.

**For the Data in Table 6**

O	e	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
-	-	-
-	-	-
4	4.85	0.15
3	2.15	0.33
5	4.15	0.17
1	1.85	0.39
<b>Total X<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>1.04</b>

df = 1

Chi-square = 1.04

For significance at .05 level, chi-square should be greater than or equal to 3.84

The distribution is not significant

**For the Data in Table 7**

O	e	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
1	0.57	0.33
-	0.43	0.43
15	18.13	0.54
17	13.87	0.71
-	0.57	0.57
1	0.43	0.74
1	0.57	0.33
-	0.43	0.43
-	0.57	0.57
1	0.43	0.74
1	0.57	0.33
-	0.43	0.43
-	0.57	0.57
1	0.43	0.74
1	0.57	0.33
-	0.43	0.43
-	0.57	0.57
1	0.43	0.74
5	2.83	1.66
-	2.16	2.16
1	0.56	0.33
-	0.43	0.43
1	0.57	0.33
-	0.43	0.43
3	3.4	0.05
3	2.6	0.06
1	1.7	0.29
2	1.3	0.38
2	1.13	0.66
-	0.87	0.87
2	1.13	0.66
-	0.87	0.87
<b>Total X<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>18.72</b>

df = 15

Chi-square = 18.72

For significance at .05 level, chi-square should be greater than or equal to 25.00

The distribution is not significant.

## **Appendix- B**

### **Interview Questions to the Module Producer**

1. As a material producer, what is your opinion with regard to entertaining the problem of gender bias while preparing the module?
2. Can you mention types/features of gender bias in materials (preferably in distanced education modules)?
3. Can you share any experience of gender bias in writing?
4. Would you tell me your sensitivity to achieve gender fair educational material?
5. Do you think gender biases in distance education modules will have any considerable effect while the students are studying the material?
6. What is your attitude towards inclusion/exclusion of gender issues in printed materials (especially in distance education modules)?
7. What were the main problems you encountered in preparing the module as related to portrayal of the sexes?
8. Have you taken any training on gender issues or have you participated in workshop, seminar etc related to gender treatment in education materials?
9. Would you comment on the availability and/or accessibility of guidelines for gender fair use of English in distance education modules and importance of such guidelines?
10. In general, how was your effort to portray male and female sexes in a balanced way?
11. If you have any further comment concerning gender equality in distanced education modules, you may add.

## **Appendix-C**

### **Interview Questions to the Module Editor**

1. As a material editor, what is your opinion with regard to entertaining the problem of gender bias while editing the module?
2. Can you mention types/features of gender bias in materials (preferably in distanced education modules)?
3. Can you share any experience of gender bias in writing?
4. Would you tell me your sensitivity to achieve gender fair educational material?
5. Do you think gender biases in distance education modules will have any considerable effect while the students are studying the material?
6. What is your attitude towards inclusion/exclusion of gender issues in printed materials (especially in distance education modules)?
7. What were the main problems you encountered in editing the module as related to portrayal of the sexes?
8. Have you taken any training on gender issues or have you participated in workshop, seminar etc related to gender treatment in education materials?
9. Would you comment on the availability and/or accessibility of guidelines for gender fair use of English in distance education modules and importance of such guidelines?
10. In general, how was your effort to edit the portrayal of male and female sexes in a balanced way?
11. If you have any further comment concerning gender equality in distanced education modules, you may add.

## **Appendix- D**

### **Transcript of the Interview**

**Key: - R<sub>1</sub> - Respondent One**

**R<sub>2</sub>- Respondent Two**

**Q- Question item**

#### **N.B- Paralinguistic elements are avoided.**

Q<sub>1</sub>. As a material producer/editor, what is your opinion with regard to entertaining the problem of gender bias while editing the module?

R<sub>1</sub>. I didn't have this issue when I prepared the materials. My concern was designing adequate tasks that would help the learners to acquire and develop various reading and writing skills.

R<sub>2</sub>. Well, in the first place I would like to tell you that I have a belief that both sexes must be treated equally in the society. But because of male dominance, women are taken to be there to serve man. He receives the best things while the poor quality things are given to the women in some societies in Ethiopia itself. In some cultures, the women eat after the owner or the master man has eaten. The best food is reserved for man. The poorest jobs which bring poor economic status are given to women. In the family, the women do a lot of the jobs freely and the majority of them are done by women. This unfair treatment of the society is usually reflected in material development. The women are characterized as servants of man in the material. This should be avoided. The exercises or tasks and passages that are used in materials must avoid these outlooks. In my material editing jobs, I carefully guard against this.

Q<sub>2</sub>. Can you mention types/features of gender bias in materials (preferably in distanced education modules)?

R1. As far as the materials I wrote are concerned, there isn't any apparent type of gender bias.

R2. Well, gender bias of the ones that I have already described should be avoided. Women should not be seen as servants of man in the exercises. This is what I guard against in my editing jobs. For example, materials should use chairperson instead of chairman, he/she instead of *he* when we refer to general jobs that should be performed by both sexes. This kind of equality must be reflected in the materials. Otherwise, women will continue to believe that they are of the lower status in the society. We should help them to develop the psychology of equality and avoid inferiority. And this is what I usually guard against. I can not be specific because I can not remember most of the features of gender bias that I have corrected in the materials.

Q3. Can you share any experience of gender bias in writing?

R1. No, not really

R2. Well, I think what I have told you show my share of the experience of gender bias. In the countryside girls are not able to go to school because of the kidnapping of men. These kinds of practices must be discouraged if they are reflected in materials. This is what I have had. But I cannot be specific now because I cannot remember most of the mistakes there in the materials.

Q4. Would you tell me your sensitivity to achieve gender fair educational material?

R1. I strongly believe that any material should be free from gender bias.

R2. Okay what I have told you is how we can prepare gender fair educational materials. If inequality of women is reflected in the exercises, they should be discouraged and I personally feel that they should be avoided because we

to use them. But there should not be an imposition here. It is the right of the individual because there are many kinds of topics that are very interesting to students that do not create any differences between sexes and so on. So, the material writer may be in a position to select whatever is good for him for the material development. From my experience, I have awareness that material writers should pay attention to gender equality. So, I have a positive attitude.

Q7. What were the main problems you encountered in preparing/ editing the module as related to portrayal of the sexes?

R1. No problem. The modules were prepared for 'writing' and 'reading' skills. So they were not written with 'males' and 'female' in mind.

R2. Well, it would be very difficult for me to remember specific instances because well ... I edited a textbook a year ago. Therefore, I cannot give you this.

Q8. Have you taken any training on gender issues or have you participated in workshop, seminar etc related to gender treatment in education materials?

R1. No

R2. Well, I have no specialization on that to tell you the truth. But I had the opportunities to participate in certain workshops incidentally not specially designed way. And I have also read a lot of texts related to gender inequality and so I believe that I have a general awareness of gender equality. That will be useful for material editing. From your questions I have understood that materials should include gender subjects. But I don't think this is possible. When I was attending a workshop on AIDS, they wanted all the English textbooks in Ethiopia to be converted into the teaching of AIDS. That is not possible! We cannot expect a material writer to include, to use all such topics AIDS or gender inequality. It should be his right. It should be given to him. It is his responsibility because he selects a subject on the basis of the suitability of the material to the teaching of the skill and so on. We should