

continuity purposes. Likewise, the textbooks under study are for the foundation phase, and during this developmental stage, a mother is an important figure in children's upbringing. This is viewed as normal in society. Fathers are left free as long as they provide money for the family although at times they do not even do so. This child caring responsibility gives females an extra burden and blocks them from living a 'normal' life. Radical feminist condemn patriarchy for females' subordination and oppression (Chiponda, 2011; Vukoici, 2013). While females will be taking care of children at home, males will be free to go out and enjoy themselves doing exciting outdoor activities, going to work and hanging around with their friends. On the other hand, Marxist feminism argues that family is the source of females' oppression and subordination (Bakan, 2012). Females are partially limited from the privileges males have. Accordingly, females are limited in their activities owing to their childcare responsibilities. Therefore, I would advocate that since parenting is a responsibility of every parent both genders should share it fairly.

These explanations from the studied textbooks prove that females are still bound by the traditional stereotypical reproductive and mothering roles. Liberal feminists, however, challenge females to shake off these domestic roles and start taking up paid labour in the market (Bakan, 2012). Marxist feminists also note that males benefit from females unpaid labour (Bryson, 1992). A study in Jamaica found out that females were depicted in traditional gender stereotypical roles (Bailey & Parkes, 2006). Again, in a study of a primary school reader in Haiti, mothers were portrayed taking care of children and preparing food while fathers were at work (Perasso, 2017). The taking on of wife and motherly roles is supported by African feminists (Chiponda, 2014). However, black feminists oppose these reproductive roles and care of the family as they deem them to be oppressive to females. In contrast, African feminists view these reproductive and motherly roles as their sore responsibility (Mikell, 1997).

My findings concur with findings from studies in other subjects. In a study of history textbooks, the researcher revealed that females were presented as mothers and wives (O'Kelly, 1983), while Osler (1994) found that females were presented nursing babies, looking after children and taking care of the family. In a Turkish textbook, females were

presented in the home environment as housewives taking care of children (Ozdogru et al., 2004), while a study in Europe portrayed females as mothers, wives, sisters, daughters and child carers (Elgar, 2004; Hardin et al., 2006; Lee & Collins, 2009; Regueiro, 2000; Mayer, 1989; O’Kelly, 1983).

Radical feminism totally rejects the idea of females being restricted to the private sphere and concentrating on marriage and childbearing (Doude, 2014; Vukoici, 2013). Radical feminists and Marxist feminists believe that restricting females to the private sphere is a form of exploitation because they are not paid to perform these roles and these duties prevent them from manoeuvring into the public sphere where they have access to opportunities (Bakan, 2012; Chiponda, 2014; Doude, 2014). It is claimed that childbearing is the beginning of female’s subordination for it prevents females from taking an active role in economic production (Bakan, 2012; Chiponda, 2011; Doude, 2014; Su; 2007; Vukoici, 2013). Females are portrayed as wives and mothers because that is a patriarchal expectation (Chiponda, 2014). Including females as wives and mothers in textbooks can be argued to serve the purpose of instilling societal values of motherhood within society in learners, since textbooks serve as an ideological tool for transmitting cultural values and beliefs (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). This does not happen in Namibia alone, but in other countries as well. These roles are attached to females despite their class, race, nationality or continent (Lerner, 1993). As a result, a better explanation can be given as to why females are depicted as mothers and wives in the studied textbooks. It is all about fulfilling the female’s religious, traditional stereotypical and reproductive roles in society. As discussed earlier on, African feminists uphold family and motherhood (Arndt, 2002; Mikell, 1997).

It was also revealed that females were mentioned because they were married or linked to famous males. Examples include Mr Gaweseb’s wife. This finding concurs with findings by Commeyras and Alvermann (1996) and findings from history textbooks in a Malawian study by Chiponda (2014), which indicated that females were mentioned because of the influential positions of the famous males around them. In Namibia, as an African country, such portrayal of females is an expectation of the patriarchal society that should be passed on from generation to generation (learners). This confirms and

presents textbooks as ideological and political tools. Kalmus (2004) states that textbooks are a trusted source of information, as they influence the quality and type of education to be achieved (Siedel et al., 2009). Textbooks thus educate learners according to what society expects. Textbooks, as tools of ideology, transmit the values of society (Brugeilles & Cromer, 2009). Textbooks are praised for being able to pass on information and the ideological values of society (Sajid, 2015; Nhundu, 2007). Therefore, females have to meet the expectations of society which are fully supported by religion, ideology and politics. For example, in Christianity females are expected to be submissive to their husbands (The Holy Bible). When it comes to feminism, the portrayal of females as mothers and wives has various explanations that would depend on the feminist perspective subscribed to (Chiponda, 2014).

6.5.2. Females in stereotypical domestic roles

With regard to domestic roles, the study also found that females were portrayed in domestic roles in a stereotypical manner in both texts and visual images. For example, in visual images in textbooks CR2, CR3, CL3, PR3 and PL3 and in written texts in textbooks PL2, PR2, CL1 and CR1 females were depicted cooking, while in textbooks CR2, PR1, PR2 and PL1 females were serving food. In visual images in textbook CR2, CR3, CL3, PR3 and PL3 and CR2 females were presented washing. In textbook CR2 females are presented doing the washing in the river and in the same textbook females are singing a song to give them strength while washing clothes. Females were also occasionally depicted in both visual images and written texts performing other domestic roles, including gardening, serving food, shopping, milking, knitting, weaving, fetching water and sweeping. Textbook PR1 contains a poem in which females are praised for their domestic subservient role and it was confirmed in the poem confirms that females are not paid for these roles.

However, as mentioned earlier on in chapter two, one of the oppressive ways is to portray females doing household chores which are not paid (Darni, 2017; Lasmirin, 2009; Nene, 2014; Purwati, 2007). Males will be engaged in paid labour while females

engage in domestic labour which is unpaid and this result in males having power over females because of the financial power they wield. This view is shared by Marxist feminists who concur that females are oppressed because of their unpaid labour (Chiponda, 2014). In a South African study, findings revealed that textbooks present females as being limited to indoor roles (Sunderland, 2000), while Clark (2005), in her study notes that domestic duties hinder females from taking up activities that could develop them so that they are equal to males in the workplace. Marxist feminists advocate that females should enter into the labour market in large numbers in order to counter Capitalism (Chiponda, 2014).

In the studied textbooks, most of the domestic roles were carried out by females. These duties were solely performed by females throughout. Findings from the studied textbooks are similar to findings obtained by other researchers both in English and other subjects. In a study of a Chinese textbook, females were portrayed doing household work while males were doing noble and exciting activities. None of the males was presented performing a care giving role (Benavot & Jere, 2016). To show that domestic roles were attached in a stereotypical manner to females, textbook CR1 give the example of a girl, Mona, cooking on fire while a boy opposite her is fishing. This concurs with the findings of a study of a Turkish Life Science textbook where females were presented working in the fields, shopping and in supportive family roles (Ozdogru et al., 2004). A South African study by Schoeman (2009) reveals that females are involved in traditional feminine roles. Portraying females in traditionally stereotypical domestic roles and reproductive roles endorses and confirms what patriarchy considers the roles and activities of females in society to be (Regueiro, 2000).

In textbook PL2, a female is tired after work yet still has to prepare supper for her husband and children. The husband and children have to decide what is to be cooked. Marxist feminists are of the view that family is the source of female oppression (Bakan, 2012). After cutting all the vegetables the female was enjoying herself and forgot that she was tired. This concurs with the findings of a study of textbooks from the Seychelles where mothers tend to have pride and get satisfaction from the stereotypical domestic roles attached to them. The females in this study however admitted that the

domestic roles gave them extra burdens (Gisela & Mahrook, 2009). In a study by Bakan (2012) and Lorber (1994), it was revealed that working mothers perform household chores after work while males relax. Angula (2003) comments that Namibian females are increasingly taking up paid labour, but they still have to go home and perform their domestic roles. Thus Western feminists are always amused by the way African females take their family roles so seriously even though these roles put pressure on them (Mikell, 1997). Marxist feminists comments that female's unpaid domestic labour benefits bosses and male workers. Females further produce the next generation of bosses, workers and wives for both bosses and workers (Chiponda, 2014; Lorber, 1994). Findings from the 12 studied textbooks reveal that females are engaged in dual roles. For example, in textbook CR2, a woman is doing laundry while taking care of a child, in textbook CR3 a woman is shopping with a crying baby covered in chocolate in the trolley; in CL2 a mother carries a baby at her back while carrying a bowl and in CR2 a female is pushing twins in a pram while doing shopping in a supermarket among other examples not mentioned. These findings concur with the results of studies on a Taiwan textbook the results of which show that females perform dual roles and this puts them under extreme pressure (Su, 2007). This overburdening of females with double roles maybe due to the fact that males in society are not socialised to help in domestic chores. Hence, it can be argued that most domestic roles are left in the hands of females. To further confirm this, a study in India confirmed that any textbook in any subject in India will just present females fetching water or working in the kitchen (Blumberg, 2007).

Females were represented as being capable of reprimanding children in textbooks PR1, PL1 and PR2. This is in line with Lasmirin and Mudoyo (2009) who notes that it is the duty of females to educate and look after children while males go to work. Educating implies training them to be well mannered.

6.5.3. Females in stereotypical occupations

In addition, the stereotyping of females manifests in occupations. In all 12 textbooks, females are mainly presented in stereotypical occupations as teachers, social workers and nurses. These are the caring professions. Textbooks CR1, CR2, CL1, CL2, CL3, PR1, PL1, and PL2 depicted females as teachers, while textbooks CL1 and CL3 depicted females as nurses. In textbook CR2 and CL2 females were presented as social workers. Females are depicted as subordinates. The findings of my study concur with the findings of studies which reveal that females were depicted as teachers, nurses, social workers, typists, fashion designers (Lee & Collins, 2009; Mayer, 1989, Higgins & Shoar-Ghaffari, 1991). Furthermore, an Algerian study found females to be depicted as teachers, nurses and typists while males were depicted as doctors, journalists, veterinary surgeons among other prestigious professions (Abdelhay & Benhaddouche, 2015). Similarly, a study by Momsen (2006) revealed that females were presented as housekeepers, secretaries, cooks or nurses while males were engineers, technicians, scientists to mention a few. With females being depicted in the caring professions, Bittman (2001) is concerned that while people benefit from these 'female' professions it makes females appear to be weak. He goes on to say that sexism does not remove females from employment but it devalues occupations where females are concentrated. The textbooks under study further depicts females in menial jobs. Textbooks PL depict a female working in a factory, CR3 depicts a female as a hairdresser, PL1 depicts women weaving and CR2, PL1 and PL3 depict women selling at the market. Similar findings were found in a study by Mayer (1989) which reveal that females were depicted in menial jobs such as picking cotton and as factory workers; in Mauritius females are mainly employed in the clothing sector where they are paid very little (Auleear, 2001). Furthermore, a study in Japan raised concern that even though there could be minor variations among the countries in which studies have been conducted, results still prove that textbooks have not sufficiently reflected the roles and occupations of females in the real world (Blumberg, 2007). Females are dominated by males in economic institutions (Chiponda, 2014). Liberal feminists believe that gender inequality is created by limiting females from accessing civil rights and by unfair allocation of resources (Giddens, 2001). These resources also include jobs

Females were, however, occasionally depicted in male-dominated professions as doctors, carpenters, musicians, pilots, plumbers and veterinary surgeon. Findings from my study show that in the textbooks females are presented more positively than those in Ozdogru et al (2004) findings, where only one female was depicted as a pharmacist. In Mayer's (1989) study of nine textbooks only one female was shown among sixteen geographers and social scientists. My study findings are however similar to those of Lee and Collins (2009) where females were occasionally depicted as astronauts, boxers, weight lifters, managers and film makers. In order to maintain this positive portrayal of females, publishers are encouraged to present females in a more positive manner in occupations (Mutekwe & Mutekwe, 2012) because this will help to redress gender bias in society. White females were occasionally presented in challenging masculine occupations.

6.5.4. Females in stereotypical games and activities

Additionally, stereotyping of females occurred in visual images in games and activities. The findings of the current study reveal that females were depicted taking part in stereotypical games and activities. The main game females were presented taking part in was netball. My findings contradict those of Abdelhay and Benhaddouche (2015) who found females were not depicted as taking part in sports activities. Males took part in nine different sporting disciplines like cycling, football, baseball athletics, to mention a few, while females were not visible. Furthermore, females were presented taking part in indoor activities. However, females were depicted as taking part in games and activities together with males although this did not happen often. This is in agreement with findings from a US study which found that 88% of athletes were male with only 12% female. The study reveals that females were depicted as underperformers in male dominated games and activities. For example, in textbook PR1 a girl is playing cricket and loses the game; in the same book a female is riding a skateboard but falls off several times. Such depictions of females portray them as unfit to participate in male-dominated games. Females were presented playing indoor games which included playing with puzzles and dolls. Sunderland (2000), note that textbooks limit females to

passive activities. This finding is similar to a finding pertaining to a Kenyan English reader where females were depicted plaiting dolls' hair (Perasso, 2017). I can argue that girls will be preparing for their future roles as mothers.

6.5.5. Females as weak

Furthermore, females were portrayed as patients in the textbooks studied. They were portrayed as miserable, sad, helpless, hopeless and fearful in textbooks CR1, PL3, CL3, CR2 and PL3. For example, in textbook PR1 a female is presented falling off a skateboard several times because she cannot control it. This agrees with a study conducted in Jordan and Palestine where females were portrayed as patients who were dominated by males while males were depicted as superior and capable (McCabe et al., 2011). Females were depicted crying and showing their emotions. This concurs with Vincke (2004) who notes that it is considered normal for females to cry or show their emotions in public while it is considered to be weakness in males. Females were also presented as being vulnerable to sexual abuse. Doube and Tapp (2014) and Bryson (1999) note in this regard that patriarchy uses force, threats, rape and violence to control females.

From the discussion presented in this section, I would argue that females are over presented in visual images while underrepresented in texts. Females were also presented in a stereotypical manner, for example in parental roles, domestic roles, occupations, games and activities, as well as being patients. In domestic and reproductive roles, females are presented as people with no agency to initiate change to the way they are portrayed; they are presented as being comfortable with the status quo. Stereotyping of roles led to the oppression of females in textbooks. The oppression of females in the studied textbooks resonates with the findings of studies on both English textbooks and other subjects worldwide, as indicated by the literature review. I can therefore conclude that the oppression of females occurs in different forms in textbooks regardless of the subject area of the textbook or the geographical setting. I also found that patriarchy and culture were the main cause of female

oppression in English junior primary textbooks which concurs with the results of other studies. The feminist theories helped me to reach to this conclusion. I could not, however, rule out other forms of oppression including tradition, African culture, race and capitalism. In the next chapter, chapter seven, I conclude my study.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUDING THE STUDY

7.1. Introduction

This qualitative study explored the representation of females in junior English primary textbooks in Namibia. The research was guided by the main research question: How are females represented in junior primary English textbooks in Namibia? In support, three sub-research questions were formulated to find out more about female representation. These questions are:

- (i) How are females represented in visual images?
- (ii) How are females represented in texts?
- (iii) Why females are represented in the way they are?

The findings of the study, as presented in chapter five, helped me to reach to concrete conclusions regarding the representation of females in the sample. In this chapter, I wind up the study by reflecting on the main findings. I do this in order to advance my thesis and to also make certain recommendations based on my findings.

First, I review and summarise the way in which I reached to my conclusions. Second, I summarise the findings of the study by linking them to the research questions. Third, I reflect on the effectiveness of the methodology and methods I used. Fourth, I explain the effect conducting this study had on me as a researcher and educationist. Fifth, I examine the implications this study will have for policy making, practice as well as for further research around this topic. Sixth, I consider the contribution made by this study, and seventh I highlight the limitations of the study. I then conclude the chapter and the study with my final reflections.

7.2. Summary and review of the study

My study was presented in seven chapters. In chapter one I introduced the study and provided background and context to the study. I described the geographical location of Namibia and its economic, social and educational system. As a researcher, I explained my position and biographical background and I subsequently declared that I subscribe to feminism. I further declared that I have an interest in issues that involve females and that I am also female. I went further to highlight the rationale and motivation of the study. I explained the research problem, purpose of the study and provided research questions. I also provided a summary of the theoretical and conceptual framework, the research design and methodology for my study in order to bring to light how the study was planned and conducted, and how research questions would be answered.

I move on to chapter two where I reviewed the literature pertaining to my study topic. The literature review was done in order to locate my study and help me when discussing the findings. In reviewing the literature, I looked into textbook production, characteristics of textbooks, and the role and nature of textbooks. Of note was that politics plays a pivotal role in determining what should be in textbooks including the exclusion, inclusion and portrayal of females. I reviewed literature on various studies done in many countries across the globe that include English textbooks and textbooks in other subjects concerning the representation and portrayal of females. I noted that very little has been done to analyse textbooks in Africa, especially Southern Africa let alone in Namibia. I only managed to pick up studies of this nature in Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe in Southern Africa. Furthermore, the studies I found in these countries analysed secondary school textbooks. As a result, I found a gap for my study. The literature review indicated that females are underrepresented. They are also portrayed in the usual traditional roles as mothers or wives and in stereotypical feminine domestic roles, occupations, games and activities. The findings of the literature review gave me room to discuss the findings of the study in chapter six.

Chapter three was a continuation of the literature review. In this chapter, I looked at the theoretical and conceptual framework and used them to explain the portrayal and representation of females. I used feminism as my theoretical perspective which also

formed my conceptual framework. I made a bricolage framework that I used in my analysis of textbooks on the portrayal of females. The bricolage was made up of six feminism perspectives namely liberal feminism, radical feminism, socialist feminism, black feminism, African feminism and Marxist feminism. This bricolage helped me in the analysis of the representation and portrayal of females in textbooks and in answering my last question pertaining to why females are portrayed in particular ways.

Chapter four saw me explaining the research design and methodology I used in my study that would help me to answer the research questions posed in chapter one. I chose a critical paradigm because of its argument that reality is socially constructed by economic, political and cultural aspects of society and its efforts to bring justice to the oppressed. My choice was also based on the link between feminism and a critical paradigm because I wanted a smooth flow of ideas. I used a qualitative research approach as my design because it helped me to get to the bottom of how and why females are presented in an unequal manner and in stereotypical roles. This research approach connects very well to the critical paradigm. My study used a case study. For the analysis of textbooks, I used document analysis supported by CDA and TA. The findings of these analyses are presented in chapter six.

In chapter five I presented my report on the findings of both the analysis of the visual images and texts of the 12 textbooks studied. These findings were later discussed in chapter six and compared to the literature covered in chapters two and three. The discussion of findings concurred with previous studies around the world even in different textbooks and contexts. Through the use of theory, the findings summed up that patriarchy played a major role in influencing the portrayal of females in the textbooks studied. However, it should also be noted that changes that have taken place in Namibia as a result of policy on gender also help to explain the portrayal of females in these textbooks.

In chapter six, I discussed and presented my findings. I did this by comparing my findings with literature on both research conducted on English textbooks and textbooks in other subjects and the theoretical framework. I revealed the similarities and differences between what I found and the existing literature. I also explained the

reasons for any similarities and differences between my findings and the literature using the theory and certain philosophical explanations.

I finally conclude the study in chapter seven. I present this summary and overview in order to showcase the steps I followed in order to answer the research questions which was my main goal in undertaking this study. In the next section, I present the research findings that relate to the research questions. This is done in order to answer the research questions and also to prove the extent to which far the study achieved its intended purpose. The study had one main research question and three sub-research questions.

7.3. Answering the research questions

7.3.1. Main research question: How are females represented in junior English textbooks in Namibia?

The study found an interesting discrepancy. In the initial phase during which I became familiar with the data, females were overrepresented in the sampled textbooks. This overrepresentation manifested itself in visual images where there were more females than males. In as much as females were represented in large numbers, they were portrayed as people of lesser value as compared to what males were depicted doing. Many of the representations stereotyped females or depicted them as weak rather than agents. I summarise these findings in this section.

This overrepresentation of females may be explained in terms of the recent gender awareness in the country with campaign for gender parity and the recognition of females as a marginalised group. The publisher of the textbooks may consequently have been alerted to recognising females more and probably ended up with more female images than male image. This overrepresentation of females is superficial and does not necessarily indicate sound female representational practices and might also be because of the age group (target audience) where the role of the mother is dominant during the first school years of the child. This finding is not supported by literature from other studies both of English and other subjects.

However, females were found to be underrepresented in written texts. Females spoke less than males or, in some textbooks; they were totally silent. This is supported by many studies in the literature on both English textbooks and textbooks in other subjects where females are dominated by males when it comes to talking. Literature reveals that when it comes to talking males talk more while females do the listening, resulting in males dominating the conversation. This is done so that females are put in their rightful place in line with societal expectations (Ullah et al., 2016).

With regard to the first question, females were being stereotyped in the textbooks studied. It emerged that females were stereotyped in various ways. One way females were stereotyped was through constantly linking them to domestic roles both in texts and verbal images and this manifested across all the textbooks under study. In most societies, domestic roles are considered to be a female responsibility, most probably because of their nurturing roles. Textbook PR1 even contained a poem praising females for practising their domesticity roles. It also emerged those females even to go the extra mile to do household chores even though they were tired after work. This is highlighted by feminists, who condemn it, citing that it places an extra load on the already overloaded females. Females were also depicted carrying out double roles.

The stereotyping of females was also high-lighted by portraying females mostly as mothers and wives; this was the case in all 12 textbooks both in texts and visual images. In most societies across the globe, females have the roles of wife and mother attached to them and females are expected to get married and bear children they will have to take care of. Bearing children is risky for females because they may even die in the process. Throughout all the textbooks females were portrayed taking care of children. As a result portraying females as mothers and wives will restrict them to the feminine traditional roles and reproductive roles as expected by society. It further restricts females from participating fully in means of production or upgrading them. This portrayal of females as wives and mothers in both English textbooks and other subjects is widely supported by literature from many continents although it is condemned by feminists.

More stereotyping of females manifested in texts where females were mentioned linked to their marital status. Their husbands were depicted as rich or famous. This portrayal depicts females as people whose own names are unknown, who can only excel and have fame in life through their husbands or fathers. It also raises the notion that females rely on males in order for them to be famous or recognised and reinforces the idea of females being wives. I found literature in support of this notion mostly in research on History textbooks.

Further stereotyping of females manifested itself in the way they were depicted in occupations both in texts and visual images. More females were depicted in traditional stereotypical caring professions, such as social workers, teachers and nurses. These occupations were attached to females most probably because of their caring and nurturing qualities and nature (Golombok & Fivush, 1994). Females were also depicted taking up low paying jobs as factory workers, maids, cleaners and selling at the markets. These types of jobs are not known to be high paying. Presenting more females in these stereotypical jobs reinforces the idea that they are even subordinates in the workplaces. This subordination was presented in textbooks for example by portraying females as nurses while males were doctors and females as teachers and males as principals.

Stereotyping of females in textbooks is not unique to my study, it is found in many studies either of English or those of other subjects. This shows how this is not a challenge in Namibian textbooks alone but also a global one. As such, it is a genuine problem that needs to be looked into and be corrected in order to have a fair representation and portrayal of females in textbooks. There is a real need for change for if not corrected learners who are the users of these textbooks will grow up believing that this kind of portrayal is true (Kalmus, 2004).

Although females were depicted in stereotypical jobs, the findings revealed that there were other females who were presented taking up jobs that are normally regarded as

masculine. For example, females were presented as pilots, doctors, veterinary surgeons, builders and plumbers. Such portrayals, even though few in number, can make learners (the users of these textbooks) aware that females can also perform jobs that males perform and that females have roles that they can perform better in addition to being mothers and wives, which is how they are usually depicted. However, the fact that few females were portrayed in these challenging occupations raises the question of why they were so few. This finding is not peculiar to my study; several studies of both textbooks of English and other subjects had similar findings. This therefore implies that a minority of females are capable of fighting their way to prestigious and so-called masculine jobs while the majority of females are incapable of achieving this. This therefore calls for a total change in the way females are portrayed doing jobs in textbooks in Namibia and in the rest of the world. Many more instances of counter-stereotypical portrayal are needed to address the assumption that females lack the potential to do great things as far as occupations are concerned.

Further stereotyping of females emerged in the games and activities played in the textbooks both in texts and visual images. Females were portrayed mainly playing feminine games. For example the sport that dominated was netball which females were playing in large numbers. While girls were presented playing netball, boys were into soccer. An interesting pattern in this regard is that females were depicted playing games together with males. Females were depicted joining males in games usually referred to as masculine (like soccer and cricket) but males were never depicted joining females in their games. It can be assumed that males view games associated with females as of less value. Where females did join in male aligned games, they were depicted as losers. Such portrayal can dampen the spirit of females. It should also be noted that females participated in gender neutral games like athletics, tennis, swimming and volleyball as females alone or with males. However, while females were depicted playing feminine games, they also had a chance to take part in outdoor games. This is contrary to my literature review where findings from other researchers showed that females were depicted playing indoor games.

Females were also depicted doing typical female activities. For example, girls were doing indoor activities, playing with dolls, imitating their mothers and so forth. For example, girls played with dolls while boys played with cars. To enhance this, parents were even seen purchasing different 'relevant' toys for each gender. Literature supports the finding that girls have toys different from boys. Young girls were depicted doing activities that prepare them to be future mothers. Already at a tender age they are directed towards society's expectations. Regarding activities, research on other English textbooks presented boys being adventurous and having interesting games while girls' activities were deemed to be boring and done indoors.

Finally, females were represented in a stereotypical manner by showing them as weak. Females were depicted both in texts and visual images as crying, fearful, failing, being stuck, incapable and as victims. In contrast, males were presented as being brave, knowledgeable and capable. An example of this appears in textbook PR1 where a girl kept on falling off a skateboard, another was afraid to sleep in the dark and yet another was pushed into a river. Such portrayals relegate females as incapable in society while males are depicted as brave.

The findings I have summarised above show that although females were slightly overrepresented, they were portrayed in stereotypical roles in the textbooks studied. In addition, very few females were portrayed as exceptional. This portrayal where females are presented in a stereotypical manner amounts to oppression. As a researcher, I take a feminist stance and strongly argue that females are oppressed in the sample of Namibian textbooks. In the next section I explain how females are represented in visual images in textbooks.

7.3.2. Sub-research question one: How are females represented in visual images?

It was established that females were represented slightly more in visual images. Furthermore, females were presented in parental roles, domestic roles, occupations, games and activities that are stereotypical in nature. Visual images predominantly depicted females as mothers and wives. Females were depicted taking care of children

and their husbands. In domestic roles, females were presented doing stereotypical female duties. These roles as mothers and wives were found to give females many responsibilities in relation to the household and children. For example, working mothers will go to work for paid labour and are expected to come home and do household chores as well as being responsible for the family. This gives females an extra burden and it prevents them from taking up challenging roles in the labour market (Chiponda, 2014). Of concern was females portrayed taking up double roles. For example, females were depicted shopping or washing while taking care of the children. Such double roles place a heavy burden upon females.

Females were seen engaged mostly in stereotypical female occupations. They were mainly engaged in caring professions such as teachers, nurses and social workers. They were also depicted doing menial work as factory workers and maids. This resulted in females getting meagre wages because such occupations are not known to pay better wages. Occasionally, there were some exceptions where females were depicted taking up challenging male-dominated occupations. This came as a positive note towards promoting gender equality, although the number of females presented in counter-stereotypical occupational roles was insignificant.

Games and activities were generally also presented in a stereotypical manner. Females were mostly presented playing feminine games while males were depicted playing masculine games. Females were however presented joining males in their games and activities, although they were to a great extent portrayed as failures in those games and activities. This implied that they were trying to join the masculine world of men, but failed. It was also further established that visual images portrayed females as patients who are victims, helpless, fearful, hopeless and miserable. Of concern is that males were never portrayed as such in the sampled textbooks.

7.3.3. Sub-research question two: How are females represented in texts?

When it comes to written texts, females were generally side-lined or ignored. They did not talk much. It is evident from the number of texts in chapter 5 which shows

presentation of texts. In texts, females were mainly portrayed as mothers and wives, which they were proud of being and performed these duties happily. Females took care of sick children, took them to the doctor, fed children and took general care of them. Females were also presented taking up stereotypical domestic roles. They were further praised for performing such roles. Furthermore, it was highlighted that the domestic roles they were doing were unpaid and left them with no time to rest. Females were presented being proud of the unpaid domestic roles which they performed whole heartedly.

Regarding occupations, females were associated mainly with the caring professions that include social work, teaching and nursing. Females were depicted caring for children, learners and patients. A few females were presented as business women, buying and selling items for profit. However, on the other hand, at least these females were presented as being able to work and make a living from the sales. It could be implied that females manage to run their own business suggesting that they are capable of grabbing opportunities that lead to means of production and economic freedom. It also emerged that females were selling fruit at the markets to make a living. I argue that females were doing menial jobs that pay them less. On a positive note, a handful of females were depicted taking challenging roles. A notion that is disputed by liberal feminists who argue that resources and opportunities are not shared equally (Chiponda, 2014).

When it comes to games and activities, females were presented in stereotypical activities and games such as indoor games and activities. Furthermore, females were depicted playing with feminine toys to the extent that one girl mentioned that she could not play with a toy car because she was not a boy. Finally, females were depicted as patients rather than as agents. They were presented as fearful, helpless, crying and running out of ideas.

7.3.4. Sub-research question 3: Why are females represented in the way they are?

In the previous section, I highlighted how females were slightly overrepresented in visual images, underrepresented in texts, stereotyped in parental roles, domestic roles,

games and activities as well as being viewed as victims or patients. In this section, I provide explanations for why females are oppressed and stereotyped.

It was established that females were oppressed in junior English textbooks mainly by patriarchy. I argue that patriarchy is behind the stereotyping and underrepresentation of females in textbook. This is because patriarchy tends to prevail in all areas of life, including the society and culture (Abbott et al., 2005; Bryson, 1999). Fingers are pointed mainly at patriarchy because it considers females and males as different, and females to be inferior, weak, irrational, less capable, subordinate, nurturers and incapable of excelling as leaders. Males, however, are seen as being capable, rational, strong, superior and good leaders (Chiponda, 2014). A patriarchal system holds that females are (only) nurturers which implies that females are viewed as wives and mothers and as having domestic roles, stereotypical occupations, stereotypical games and activities. Females are further seen as subordinates to their male counterparts as is the explanation of females by patriarchy. Textbooks are a mirror of the country in which they are produced (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). Hence, it can be argued that the way females are portrayed in the studied textbooks reflect how females are viewed in Namibia. The stereotyping of females is a result of the power struggle females enter into when they take a part in society. It is knowledge of the powerful group that is presented in textbooks and the decision to present females is determined by those with political power (Chiponda, 2014). This is the basis for gender inequality in society and explains the mechanisms employed to keep females in stereotyped roles.

Owing to patriarchal beliefs, females were the only ones depicted doing menial jobs. Marxist feminists believe that this exploitation of females in the labour market is done in order to sustain capitalists (Bryson, 1999). Black females were further involved in feminine stereotypical jobs while white females were often depicted taking up challenging masculine jobs. For example, all housemaids, factory workers, teachers, nurses and social workers were black females while some doctors and veterinary surgeons were white females. It can therefore be argued that there was a discrepancy in the manner that black and white females were depicted in the textbooks. It should also be noted that there are very few white females presented in these textbooks. Most

of the textbooks do not have single representation of white females in them, demographically indicating that most females are black Namibians. Yet, Namibia has a high level of diversity which includes whites and many different tribes, such as the Owambo, Herero and Damara. Black feminists maintain that females are oppressed not only by patriarchy but by other sources of power (Kolawole, 2002), including race, culture, tradition, ethnicity, religion, apartheid and colonialism, and these interact to serve hegemonic practice. Patriarchy attempts to normalize the power in society that is accepted without interrogating it (Arndt, 2002). Black feminists describe race as the most powerful source of oppression.

I further established that females were oppressed by their recognition only in terms of the position of males that surround them, which includes their fathers or husbands. This implies that females are not recognised in their own right or based on their own efforts. Therefore, I argue that females are oppressed due to the social status they are obliged to accept.

Females were slightly overrepresented in the sample. It was established that this could have been done in order to compensate for the previous underrepresentation of females. Indeed, it might indicate a superficial attempt to demographically represent females in the majority regarding the two sexes. However, I argue that this overrepresentation of females was not statistically significant, as the data contradicted the possibility that, on a deeper level, females were depicted in stereotype roles throughout the sample.

I further established that females were oppressed by not being given strong voice. In texts females spoke very little. Females, who do not have a strong voice, merely react, rather than act and it might be an indication that they are omitted or “not heard.” This is supported by the literature under review. Gender equality is rectified in texts by the way they are given a voice in textbooks (Du Bois, 1986 cited by Nene, 2014).

This section has managed to show the reasons why females were portrayed the way they are portrayed in the textbooks under study. Mechanisms of gender oppression such as being silenced, stereotyped, omitted, segregated and being underrepresented

were used to oppress females in the sample textbooks. At the root of these mechanisms is patriarchy in society which plays a major part in oppressing or ignoring females.

7.4. Reflection on the methodological approach

In this section, I reflect on and evaluate the methodology employed to address the research questions of this study. Of the many textbook analysis methods, I used the CDA and TA. These two methods assisted me to answer the research question of this study. Findings from the sub-research questions helped me to effectively answer my main research question on how females are represented in junior primary English textbooks in Namibia. I could therefore strongly argue that the two methods were relevant and suitable for answering my research questions.

In as much as the two methods were effective in achieving my goal, they were not really easy. For example, with CDA I had to read and analyse as a non-critical reader and read again and analyse as a critical reader. I found this to be time consuming and demanding. In TA, trying to code and trim the data to make them manageable was a challenge. Some researchers work with research assistants but I did not do that; I did it myself. I wanted to learn how these two analysis methods are performed and understand how they support each other.

7.5. Reflections on personal and professional aspects of the study

This study on the representation of females in textbooks was important to me as an individual and as a professional. This study managed to answer the question I was grappling with my whole life, as I mentioned in my rationale and motivation of study in chapter one. In addition to obtaining answers to this question, I have managed to realise the power patriarchy has in society and in determining how females should be presented in textbooks. I personally suggest that the representation and portrayal of females in textbooks can be made better if those with hegemonic power support the fair inclusion of females in textbooks as politics play an important role in the production of

textbook. Textbooks have the power to change society in order for it to be a good example of how it should be in an equitable world (Engelbrecht, 2008).

As a professional, this study has helped me to develop more research skills. Previously, I was conducting research using interviews and questionnaires but this study encouraged me to explore other methods which were not familiar to me, namely textbook analysis methods. I learnt to work with documentary sources. The study also helped me to obtain more insight into textbook production, the mentoring role of textbooks and how textbooks can have an impact on gender equality.

7.6. Implications of the study

This section looked at the implications of the study for policy and future studies. I based these implications on the findings discussed in chapter six and the summary provided in section 7.3. The study revealed that females were stereotyped in many ways in the studied textbooks. As a researcher, I believe that this study could at least raise an awareness of unfair practices in the portrayal of females in textbooks in Namibia. Textbook authors, publishers and other education stakeholders should take cognisance of the findings that indicate implicit and explicit stereotypical patterns such as the representation of females only in parental and domestic roles. Many silences were found pertaining to occupations, games and activities that females were not part of. Females were further marginalised in texts where they were not depicted with agency, rather being presented as weak or victims. The findings of this study indicate that authentic representation of females in texts and in visual images in textbooks should address gender equity and thus make females more pertinent and relevant.

I suggest that this should first of all be incorporated at the curriculum implementation stage when the curriculum is being developed. The Ministry of Education through the curriculum development unit (NIED) should train its personnel about gender and the effects of gender inequality before developing curriculum. This can help NIED to produce a curriculum that is gender balanced with no stereotypes. This training might help staff and textbook authors and illustrators to create roles and activities that are

balanced for both genders. If there is gender balance in the curriculum, textbook publishers will automatically follow suit because they will not want to produce textbooks that deviate from the curriculum; thus deliberately maintaining gender equity.

As noted earlier on, the way females are portrayed in the textbooks reflects how the nation value females. Namibia has been a signatory to various treaties that are meant to promote gender equality; in addition, a policy ensuring gender sensitivity and equality in the curriculum and in textbooks used in schools is in place, as highlighted in chapter one. However, what was found in the sampled textbooks did not meet the requirements of the policy. In textbooks, visual images should portray females in a positive way that does not oppress or marginalise them. The frequency and agency of female speech should be equal to that of males that is conversation between both genders should balance. Moreover, the Ministry of Education should come up with strict mechanisms for evaluating textbooks to make sure that publishers adhere to gender equality and sensitive requirements as stipulated by the curriculum.

It was further established that females were stereotyped in the studied textbooks even though there is a policy that discourages it. The findings indicate that patriarchy is evident in society. I recommend tougher measures to ensure counter stereotypical depictions. Curriculum developers should also adhere to these measures and should comprise of both genders in order to prevent rather than cure female stereotyping in textbooks.

In this study, females were occasionally depicted in exceptional roles. Such females should be presented in large numbers so that they can act as role models. Since Namibia is a developing country, depicting females in exceptional roles may help females to challenge patriarchy. Furthermore, the agency of females in textbooks should be addressed. Too many females were presented as weak or victims where they were depicted looking miserable, sad, hopeless and as failures. Such portrayals have detrimental effects on the female learners who will be using the textbooks. This also has an impact to the male learners who will use the textbooks for they will tend to

view females the way they are presented in textbooks. I therefore suggest that the negative portrayal of females in textbooks should be avoided. Textbook publishers should be reminded of this and a policy to this effect should be put in place with the help of Ministry of Education.

7.7. Implications of the study for further research

This study dealt with EFL textbooks at junior primary level. Further research could be carried out on female representation in textbooks of other subjects such as mathematics, environmental studies and Religious and moral education at junior level.

It was explained in chapter one that this study was concerned only with junior primary English textbooks. As a result of this, information on how females are represented in primary English textbooks is limited to these textbooks under study. Knowledge on how pre-primary and senior primary English textbooks represent females is not yet clear. Therefore, further research needs to be conducted on English textbooks at the pre-primary and senior primary levels. This will help to produce a holistic picture of how females are represented in English textbooks at primary level in Namibia. Furthermore, in chapter one it was indicated that the textbooks under study were for English first language; hence further studies could be carried out to find out how females are represented in English second language textbooks at lower primary level in Namibia

In chapter one it was also mentioned that the study was concerned with females and not as a direct comparison to males. In this study, males were merely mentioned in order to justify the representation of females in textbooks. As a result there is no knowledge on the representation of females in comparison with males. Therefore, a further study could be carried out on the representation of gender in textbooks in order to find out how females are represented in relation to males.

Finally, I hope this study has opened doors to many more studies in textbooks to be carried out in Namibia. This study might be the first contribution pertaining to textbook analysis in Namibia.

7.8. Contribution of the study

It is in the light of the previous paragraph that I claim that the novelty of this study lies in the opening up of the knowledge field of textbook research in Namibia. From the literature reviewed, most of the research studies in English textbooks were carried out in Europe (Ozdogru, Erdogan & Gok, 2004; Regueiro, 2000; Mayer, 1989;), USA (Darni, 2017; Golombok & Fivus cited by Blumberg, 2015; McCabe et al., 2011; Hanson, 1999), Asia (Chen & Chen, 2002; Benavot & Jere, 2016; Guo & Zhan Zhou, 2002; Yi, 2002; Gupta & Yin, 2009; Asadulla, 2018; Su, 2007), Australia (Goddard & Patterson, 2000; Stockdale, 2006; and in Africa (Osman, 2006; Ram, 2008; Abdelhay & Benhaddouche, 2015; Gem report, 2016; Gisela & Mahrook, 2009; McKinney, 2005; Zerar & Riche, 2014; Maistry et al., 2014; Dudu et al., 2008; Gaidzanwa, 1997). Similarly, from my literature review studies of other subjects indicated the same trends and patterns. However, in Namibia, no study in English textbook analysis that I know of so far has been carried out. As a result, this study has managed to contribute to a body of knowledge on textbook research as a whole by researching female representation in English textbooks in a country previously not researched. This is a major contribution especially to the research on the representation of females in textbooks and the general study of textbooks. Many studies found out that females were indeed stereotyped, marginalised and underrepresented in texts. The results of my study thus resonate with the findings of other studies of English and other subjects (Nene, 2014; Mutekwe & Mutekwe, 2007; Stromquist, 2007; Chiponda, 2014; Momsen, 2006; McCabe et al., 2011; Gharbavi & Mousavi, 2012; Chanzangh et al., 2011). Findings of these studies were from different countries. My study from a country that had not been researched, confirms the same findings. Hopefully, this will not be the last study to consider female representation in Namibian textbooks. This study, therefore, adds new knowledge to the existing body of literature.

7.9. Limitations of the study

It is common for research studies to have limitations (Chiponda, 2014). This study was not different. The limitations included the level of textbooks to be analysed and the choice of textbooks to be analysed. I was limited to studying textbooks used at junior primary level and the 12 textbooks I used were produced by just two publishers– the Namibian Publishing house which published all the creative textbooks and Pearson Namibia which published all the Platinum textbooks. These were the only two publishers with textbooks available that are recommended for the new curriculum; hence this limited the study to those two publishers and textbooks. The findings of this study do not represent the representation of females in the whole primary level and therefore the findings cannot be used to generalise findings at primary level since some primary English textbooks were not part of the sample.

This study was a qualitative study and like any qualitative studies it does not claim that the findings can be generalised to other contexts (Christensen et al., 2011). This means that my study will not be used to generalise findings on the representation of females in English textbooks in future.

The other limitation is that the study relied on documentary evidence only. No participants were employed and perspectives, interpretations and conclusions from this study were my personal views which were also influenced by my personal meaning-making which, in turn, was influenced by my background which I explained in chapter one. Participants might have introduced different perspectives on the researched phenomenon of female representation in textbooks.

7.10. Conclusion and final reflections

This chapter sought to conclude this study. It analysed the implications for practice and policy while highlighting areas for further studies. It also in a nutshell gave conclusions drawn from the research findings.

I presented the chapter in ten sections. I began with a summary and review of the study in which I gave a brief explanation of the contribution of all the chapters of this study. I

did this in order to show the route I followed in order to reach to the conclusions. I then linked the findings to the research questions in order to show how the research questions were answered. I then reflected on how effective the methodology and methods used were in answering the research questions. This was followed by my personal and professional reflections on the study, while indicating how the study influenced my growth personally and as a professional. The following section looked at the implications of the study for policy, practice and further research. The next section dwelt on the contributions made by the study. I then considered the limitations of the study. Lastly, I presented a summary of the study, the conclusion and a final reflection on the study. It is my wish that this study contributes to a fairer representation of females in Namibian textbooks.

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