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**A STUDY ON GENDER STEREOTYPES AND
GENDER CONSCIOUSNESS REFLECTED IN
THE VIEW OF CHINESE BASIC EDUCATION
CLASSROOM TEACHERS AND TEXTBOOKS.**

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ABSTRACT

Hao Liu: A Study on Gender Stereotypes and Gender Consciousness Reflected in the View of Chinese Basic Education Teachers and Textbooks.

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The effects of gender stereotypes presented in educational textbooks and teachers' ideas on students' gender consciousness in primary school have attracted the attention of numerous scholars. This study examines the presentation of gender stereotypes in two public primary schools in Chongqing, China, using primary school teacher interviews and the analysis of Chinese textbooks published by the People's Education Press. Concurrently, this study demonstrates that gender stereotypes exert an influence on students' ideas, as evidenced by the findings of the questionnaire administered to students in these two educational institutions.

To investigate this topic, this study combined two exploratory approaches. The first was interview with teacher to examine their conceptions related students' gender consciousness and how they act upon their assumptions in the interaction with students. The second approach involved analysing qualitatively figures and texts in primary school textbooks, aiming to identify if and how gender stereotypes are present in such materials. In the student questionnaire, it was observed that the gender stereotypes identified in teacher interviews and textbooks were also evident in students' choices. The purpose of this study is to draw the attention of relevant primary school teachers, textbook writers and primary school institutions to the issue of gender stereotypes and provide a reference point for subsequent research on gender stereotypes in Chinese primary education.

Keywords: Gender stereotype, Chinese primary school, textbook, interview, critical discourse analysis.

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	5
1.1	1.1 Definition of gender	8
1.2	1.2 Gender study in China.....	11
2	METHODOLOGY	18
2.1	2.1 Research design	18
2.2	2.2 Participants and research material	19
2.3	2.3 Data collection: instruments and procedures	22
2.4	2.4 Data analysis	23
2.4.1	2.4.1 <i>Three-dimensional conception of discourse</i>	23
2.5	2.5 Ethics.....	28
2.6	2.6 Data management.....	30
3	FINDINGS	30
3.1	3.1 Text: teacher interview analysis.....	30
3.1.1	3.1.1 <i>Gender stereotype in vocabulary level</i>	30
3.1.2	3.1.2 <i>Gender stereotype in thematic level</i>	34
3.2	3.2 Text: textbook analysis.....	54
3.3	3.3 Discursive practices: analysis of students' questionnaires.....	62
3.4	3.4 Social practices: an exploration of gender image in teachers' discourse	65
4	DISCUSSION	71
4.1	4.1 Results in this study	72
4.2A	4.2A trend towards gender equality and possible causes.....	72
4.3	4.3 Further considerations regarding the mitigation of gender stereotypes.....	73
5	CONCLUSION	80
5.1	5.1 Implications and Recommendations	81
5.2	5.2 Limitations	82
	REFERENCES	84
	APPENDICES	88
	Appendix 1: Teacher interview questions	88

TABLES

TABLE 1.	BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE TEACHERS INTERVIEWED	21
TABLE 2.	IDEAL MASCULINITY AND IDEAL FEMININITY	32
TABLE 3.	STATISTICS ON THE SKILLS THAT BOYS AND GIRLS ARE GOOD AT	33
TABLE 4.	CAREER EXPECTATIONS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS	35
TABLE 5.	MEN ARE STRONG AND WOMEN ARE WEAK	37
TABLE 6.	GENDER STEREOTYPES RELATED TO NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR	44

TABLE 7.	GENDER STEREOTYPES RELATED TO ACHIEVEMENT ATTRIBUTION.....	47
TABLE 8.	NEGATIVE EMOTIONS TOWARDS TRANSGENDER PEOPLE	50
TABLE 9.	TEXTS OF WOMEN AND MEN WORK IN THE PRIVATE SPHERE.....	54
TABLE 10.	TEXT DESCRIBING MALE CELEBRITIES AND FEMALE CELEBRITIES	55
TABLE 11.	STUDENTS'QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS(1)	63
TABLE 12.	STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS(2)	65

FIGURES

FIGURE 1.	APPLICATION OF THREE-DIMENSIONAL FRAMEWORK	8
FIGURE 2.	RESEARCH DESIGN	20
FIGURE 3.	AN EXAMPLE OF UNCLEAR IMAGE	22
FIGURE 4.	AN EXAMPLE OF NON-HUMAN IMAGE.....	22
FIGURE 5.	THREE-DIMENSIONAL CONCEPTION OF DISCOURSE	25
FIGURE 6.	VOCUBULARY LEVEL.....	31
FIGURE 7.	THEMATIC LEVEL	35
FIGURE 8.	PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT "LIU HULAN"	57
FIGURE 9.	PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT "I CAN'T BREAK TRUST"	58
FIGURE 10.	PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT "THE STORY OF JINGWEI"	58
FIGURE 11.	PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT "QIANREN CAKE"(1)	59
FIGURE 12.	PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT"QIANREN CAKE"(2)	59
FIGURE 13.	PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT"OSMANTHUS RAIN"	60
FIGURE 14.	PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT "RAINBOW"	61
FIGURE 15.	PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT "BIG OR SMALL "	62
FIGURE 16.	PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT "HOW I WANT TO SEE IT"(1)	62
FIGURE 17.	PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT "HOW I WANT TO SEE IT"(2)	62

1 INTRODUCTION

This study is centered in the field of education. This study aims to examine the portrayal of gender stereotypes in the People's Education Press's published Chinese primary school textbooks. I will examine the text content and illustrations from Chinese textbooks intended for grades one to six, which have been published by the People's Education Press. My goal in examining the textbook was to accumulate instances of gender stereotypes and gender-related texts and illustrations for this investigation. Chinese textbooks were selected because they are the representation of Chinese culture. By scrutinizing Chinese textbooks, one can identify the gender image formation process and comprehend the cultural gender consciousness hidden in language more transparently than studying textbooks from different areas. The textbook published by The People's Education Press is extensively utilized in primary schools throughout China, and holds a significant position in the domain. Hence, the Chinese schoolbooks produced by People's Education Press represent the most superior analytical resources for this investigation.

Additionally, we explore whether gender stereotypes are present in teachers' perceptions and their awareness of gender equality at two Chinese primary schools. Teachers' perspectives on gender equality are also within the scope of my research. The study will employ a critical discourse analysis of interview data collected from ten teachers and questionnaire data from twenty students in two primary schools in China. I interviewed five educators each from Jiulong Primary School and Nanzhou Primary School in Chongqing, China. All interviewees were classroom teachers from different subjects. Although the assessment of certain student aptitudes may have differed depending on the subject being taught by the interviewee, this did not substantially impact the data analysis. Simultaneously, 10 fifth-grade students will be randomly selected from

each school for interviews in order to observe teachers' gender concepts and the influence of gender guidance in textbooks on students.

My study aims to answer the following research questions:

Q1: How are gender stereotypes presented in the perspectives of teachers in primary schools selected for this study?

Q2: How are gender stereotypes presented in the teaching-materials made available by People's Education Press?

Q3: What is the impact of teachers' gender concepts and gender-focused content in textbooks on students?

I will use Fairclough's three-dimensional framework discourse analysis theory to examine the selected text content from the perspectives of discourse, discursive practice and social practice. Fairclough is a prominent figure in critical discourse analysis and adeptly synthesizes sociological concepts with linguistic discourse analysis. He believed that discourse, as the language of social practice, comprises three dimensions: text, discourse practice, and social practice. This type of discourse necessitates discourse analysis to be three-dimensional, consisting of the depiction of discourse linguistics, clarification of the association between discourse and the procedure of discourse practice, and interpretation of the relationship between discourse practice and social practice relation (Fairclough, 1992). In the text section, I will analyse the transcripts of teacher's interview through the dimensions of "lexicon" and "thematic analysis" as well as Chinese textbooks published by the People's Education Press through frequency statistics and content analysis; In the discourse practice section, the aim of this section is to investigate the impact of teachers' gender concepts and gender content in textbooks on students' gender concepts. This will be achieved by analysing the content of student questionnaires collected; In the social practice section, I will explore gender image of China presented in teacher's discourse and discuss causes of the image of progressive gender equality. This study discloses the gender biases present in primary education and examines the gender perceptions of teachers in the current decade. The highlighted trends may fluctuate over time.

FIGURE 1. Application of three-dimensional framework discourse analysis in this paper.

Fairclough's three-dimensional framework discourse analysis theory in this paper	
Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher's interview transcripts-lexicon & thematic analysis ▪ Chinese textbooks (PEP) -frequency statistics & content analysis
Discourse practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Questionnaires towards students-Intertextuality analysis (Teacher's discourse &Textbooks → Students' choices)
Social practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An exploration of gender image in China ▪ Causes of the image of progressive gender equality

I adhered to the ethical guidelines of scientific research integrity and privacy protection legislation as issued by the General Office of the State Council of China. I obtained permission from the Chongqing Municipality, Jiulong Primary School and Nanzhou primary school Authorities to conduct my study. Informed consents were obtained from all participants in the study. When the paper is published, all data will be destroyed. Since this study has received recognition from the decision-making departments of Chongqing Jiulong Primary School and Nanzhou Primary School, it is highly viable. There is a potential risk of inadequate data collection, which can be mitigated by contacting respondents through online means. Participants may discontinue their involvement in the study during the course of participation. Therefore, I identified and retained two substitute participants in the event of such contingencies. Participants may harbor apprehensions pertaining to possible disclosures of personal information or visit-related content. Hence, prior to the commencement of the interview, I executed an interview agreement with participants, explicitly outlining the conditions pertaining to confidentiality.

The study is structured as follows: Chapter 2 presents a literature review, wherein all literature relevant to the research objectives is reviewed. Chapter 3

describes the design and methodology of the study, along with the data analysis methods employed. Chapter 4 details the research findings. The final chapter is the conclusion, including limitations, applications and implications of the study.

This chapter examines the nature and previous research on gender stereotypes. Below, I will explore gender, the constructability of gender, and social learning theory in turn, providing clear and concise explanations. The primary research methods employed in prior studies of this topic include content analysis, language analysis, and multimodal discourse analysis. Later, I will expound upon the findings of these previous research endeavours.

1. 1 Definition of gender

According to Brugeilles and Cromer (2009), gender refers to differences between men and women in terms of social categories, such as tastes, temperaments, talents, roles, and responsibilities. Gender refers to the social and cultural roles and expectations associated with biological sex. According to Pakuła et al. (2015), gender is linked to concepts of learning, socialization, social construction, and representation, rather than being innate. This suggests that gender can be shaped. A person's own perception of their gender identity is influenced by societal factors. Among the social factors that shape gender, discourse is a crucial force that should not be overlooked. As early as 1997, Ehrlich highlighted that language use can contribute to gender construction (Ehrlich,1997) and conversely, gender norms may influence language choice and usage. The language that we encounter in our everyday lives, whether in written or visual form, can have a subtle impact on our perception and manifestation of gender. The role of language in constructing gender within basic education is mainly demonstrated through the language used by teachers and in textbooks.

Gender schema pertains to the cognitive framework devised by individuals based on societal norms distinguishing between male and female gender attributes. People then arrange and govern gender-associated information processing accordingly (Bem,1983). Gender schema theory involves treating gender as a tool people use to assess whether their behaviour aligns with the

expected patterns of a particular gender, for example if boys behave like boys and girls behave like girls. Social learning is a key step in the formation of gender schemas. Children compare themselves to their own gender expectations and adapt their behaviour accordingly. Once the schema is developed, children are expected to behave in ways consistent with traditional gender roles. The motivating force guiding children's gender-linked conduct, as in cognitive developmental theory, relies on gender-label matching in which children want to be like others of their own sex (Martin & Halverson, 1981). Gender labels can be expressed through clothing, colours, toys, etc. Researchers have discovered gender schema phenomena frequently appear in teaching activities. For instance, at graduation ceremonies, pupils wear different coloured clothing depending on their gender. However, many sociologists reject the gender dichotomy view, arguing that the similarities between men and women in the way they think and behave far outweigh their differences (Epstein, 1988; Gerson, 1990; West & Zimmerman, 1991). Gender differences will diminish over time as societies change their opportunity structures (Eagly, 1987b). Instead, over-reinforcement of gender schemas can negatively affect children's growth. Group bias may arise from gender categorization.

Gender stereotypes refer to people's fixed ideas about men and women in terms of physical characteristics, occupations, behaviours, personality traits, etc. (Weinraub, 1984) Gender stereotypes shape the perception, evaluation and treatment of men and women in gender-specific ways, resulting in patterns of behaviour that confirm the original stereotype. (Eagly, 1987a). According to social cognitive theory, gender stereotypes can also be formed through observation, imitation or reinforcement from significant others (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Parents and teachers who hold gender stereotypes will intentionally or unintentionally engage in gender-stereotypical parenting behaviours, such as encouraging students to do things according to their gender schemas, thereby shaping students' gender stereotypes. Stereotypes often tend to exaggerate or oversimplify their effects (Lewandowski, 2014). Stereotypes may amplify differences between things while minimizing similarities. For instance, the commonly held belief is that men solely provide financial support for the family, while women are solely responsible for taking care of the housework. Gender

stereotypes can form at a young age, and educational settings can reinforce such beliefs. School is a significant social influence during childhood since many children spend most of their time in this environment (Cocoradă, 2018). Educational resources, including teachers' language and textbooks, may enhance children's gender stereotypes (Lewandowski, 2014). While the school lacks a systematic curriculum that reinforces gender stereotypes, and there are only a few courses that mention gender-related topics, implicit gender information is consistently present in campus life. Skelton (1997) maintains that implicit information related to knowledge, values, norms, behaviours and attitudes is prevalent. These concepts are acknowledged by learners through education (Grayson, 2006). Furthermore, textbooks contribute significantly to the promotion of sexual bias, partiality, and discrimination through the portrayal of men and women in literature and textbook imagery (Mustapha & Mills, 2015). For example: The representation of gender in visual media often features females in childcare roles and males in adventurous ones. Numerous academics have discovered that gender stereotypes can impose various detrimental impacts on students. These stereotypes can hinder academic performance and learning potential (Cocoradă, 2018) while also influencing students' career choices (Tyarakanita et al., 2021) and social behaviour (Amodio, 2014), ultimately impacting their overall cognitive development and personality formation (Hamilton et al., 2006; Meyer, 2010).

To sum up, gender is different from biological sex. It has social attributes, that is, cultural role expectations that are consistent with biological sex. This also means that gender is malleable. People shape their gender according to the expectations of the surrounding social environment. Language is a pivotal social factor in shaping gender. Over time, the long-term process of shaping gender has resulted in the formation of general gender behavioural norms, which have been divided according to labels, forming gender schemas. Furthermore, gender schemas also become paradigms that shape gender. Adherence to gender schemas in an overly strict manner can result in the formation of gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes ignore the similarities between the sexes and exaggerate the differences. Gender stereotypes can be learned naturally through imitated behaviour. Therefore, teachers' words and textbook content that contain

gender stereotypes will have a harmful impact on students' perceptions as information that students are frequently exposed to.

1. 2 Gender study in China

I reviewed previous research on gender stereotypes in People's Education Press textbooks and teachers' awareness. I found that quantitative analysis is the most common in textbook research. Content analysis, language analysis and visual analysis are the most common methods. As for the teacher discourse and awareness, questionnaires and interviews are frequently utilized when collecting data, with the most prevalent method of analysing data being induction. Due to space limitations and because I will be using critical discourse analysis within qualitative analysis as the research method. Therefore, I will only summaries the research findings of previous researchers.

Gender stereotypes in the textbooks of the People's Education Press in previous research are mainly expressed in the following aspects: differences in professional roles between men and women, differences in family roles between men and women, differences in personality traits between men and women and disparities in the ability of gendered narratives to influence. According to Siyu's (2020) analysis of the sixth-grade English textbook published by the People's Education Press, there is a difference in the number of professional images of men and women. There are 10 types of male professional characters in the sample, and the number of occurrences is 14 times. There are only 7 types of female professional images and they appear 7 times. Male characters in textbooks tend to have jobs that are more physically demanding, or jobs that require more creativity and risk-taking. For example: workers, scientists, firemen, etc. Female characters are often involved in supportive and service-oriented activities, such as nurses, secretaries, etc. Although some anti-traditional professional roles are presented in the sample, such as female scientists. But this is not significant in terms of quantity.

There are very interesting phenomena in terms of family roles and family functions. The types of male family roles are the same as the types of female

family roles, both at 4 types. The number of male family roles in the book is 18, and the number of female family roles in the book is 16. The difference between the two is not significant, and the number of male examples is even slightly higher than the number of female examples. However, there are only three types of domestic functions for men, and they are all activities that do not require too much physical and energy consumption, such as telling stories to family members, talking to family members, and modifying robots for grandchildren. The number of family functions performed by women is six, twice as many as by men. In addition, women are mostly involved in tedious housework that requires a lot of energy and physical effort, such as taking care of children, making mooncakes, educating children, etc. It can be seen that there are stereotypes in this textbook.

The study revealed gender disparities in descriptive language. Men are described using 12 types of adjectives, appearing 15 times, whereas women are described using only 5 types of adjectives, appearing just 6 times. This discrepancy is significant, men receiving more diverse and detailed descriptors. The women in the sample were only described as happy, sick, angry, sad and worried. The use of these adjectives to describe men and women is now applied equally, with the same standards for both genders. This demonstrates progress, as it breaks the emotional stereotype often attributed to women, asserting that men too can be emotional (Gouvias and Alexopoulos, 2018). However, the researchers did find that the adjectives relating to women in the sample were predominantly emotional in nature. However, while emotional words were present in male adjectives, they only made up 10% of all male adjectives used. This perpetuates the false notion that women are inherently more emotional beings.

Furthermore, Shiting's (2022) study of Chinese primary school Chinese textbooks for grades one to six reveals that the narrative language of women is restricted in these materials. That is to say, there is a difference in the visibility of gender itself. The study revealed a significant gender disparity among authors selected for primary school Chinese textbooks. Out of 287 articles with indicated author sources, only 39 were female while 251 were male. The female authors make up a mere 13.45% of the total number of selected authors. Furthermore, male authors outstrip the number of female authors by a factor of 6.44. On

average, each textbook includes only a minimal proportion of female authors. This could propagate the gender stereotype to children that superior articles can only be written by men.

Moreover, there are disparities in the gender ratio of the main characters in the chosen articles. According to the data, there are a total of 288 passages in the selected textbooks. Sixty-two of them concentrate on character depiction, with 54 featuring male protagonists, i.e., 87.10%, and merely 8 percent on female protagonists, i.e., 12.90%. It is evident that male figures hold an overwhelming presence, with a minimal number of female characters. Furthermore, the study showed that female characters in primary school Chinese textbooks are often relegated to secondary roles, while male protagonists feature much more prominently. In fact, male characters outnumber female ones significantly and are typically depicted as heroes, leaders, and renowned historical figures with positive qualities.

Researches examining primary school teachers' gender awareness revealed that they hold varying judgments, assumptions, and expectations regarding the personality traits, learning capacities, learning outcomes, and behavioural habits of boys and girls.

According to a questionnaire survey of primary school teachers conducted by Sian and Jiaji (2007), there exists a divergence in the expectations of teachers on the ideal temperament of boys and girls. The top ten most frequently cited personality traits for boys and girls include having respect for teachers, being principled, possessing good facial features, demonstrating filial devotion, having a strong thirst for knowledge, showing unselfishness, and achieving excellent academic grades; these are regarded as the preferred character traits for both genders by teachers. However, after analysing their attributes separately, boys' ideal personality traits occur in the order of brave, strong, and humorous mentions. Comparatively, ideal girls' personality traits are kindness, gentleness, and well-behaved mentions. After analysing the data, the scholars of this research have identified that an ideal male personality consists of three categories: social factors (maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships),

comprehensive factors (having a cheerful personality and being physically fit), and independent ability (exhibiting active thinking, assertiveness, and leadership skills). The desirable personality traits for girls can be categorized into three groups: the enterprising factor (optimism, motivation, and leadership skills), the neutralizing factor (docility and consideration), and the traditional factor (carefulness and good behavior). From the above context, although in contemporary times teachers are also urging girls to cultivate an entrepreneurial and leadership-oriented mindset like boys, their ideas have not yet broken away from the shackles of altruistic demands on women's behaviour.

Basic education teachers also harbour gender stereotypes when evaluating students' academic potential and behaviour. These ingrained attitudes can result in teachers holding dissimilar expectations of students merely based on their gender. Xia's survey (2007) indicates that the majority of teachers believe that cognitive abilities are dissimilar for male and female students. In the studied group, 77.4% of educators held that science is more accessible to boys, while only 7.3% believed that girls have better ease with it. A mere 15.3% considered abilities to be similar between genders. None of the math or physics teachers surveyed believed girls earned better results in science, and only one chemistry instructor preferred female students.

In the context of language acquisition, the majority of teachers (63.2%) assert that girls possess a natural inclination towards language learning, whereas only 10.4% of teachers opine that boys are better suited. Among those surveyed, close to 80% of teachers who teach Chinese and English specifically express the view that girls have an advantage when it comes to mastering languages.

Additionally, the questionnaire survey conducted by Ziyun and Rong (2015) revealed that 48.7% of primary school teachers who took part in the research believed that there is no difference in the learning ability between boys and girls, while 51.3% of teachers held a contrary view. Moreover, 53.3% of teachers considered that girls have better learning habits, whereas only 4.2% of teachers believed that boys have better learning habits. According to a survey of teachers,

32.7% believe that girls are more interested in learning, while only 9.7% believe that boys are more interested.

In terms of teaching expectations, 32.7% of teachers hold greater expectations for male students compared to 7.9% of teachers who have higher expectations for female students. In addition, 44.5% of teachers have higher teaching evaluations for male students, while only 7.3% have equivalent evaluations for female students. Furthermore, only 17.6% of teachers have greater trust in male students for class management, compared to 47.3% who trust female students more. It is apparent that, despite teachers' beliefs that girls display greater adherence to classroom management and possess superior learning attitudes and performance, the majority maintain that boys' learning aptitude and academic standard exceed those of girls.

Additionally, Xia's research (2007) identified that certain primary school teachers possess immature understandings of gender equality. Within her study, 47.2% of teachers asserted that "treating men and women in the same way" signified equality between the sexes, while 38.4% of surveyed teachers believed that this was not a satisfactory measure of gender equality. 14.4% of teachers held vague attitudes. When posed the question, "Do you believe that gender equality implies that men and women are identical?" a significant majority of teachers concurred (79% overall), but the percentage of female teachers who supported this assertion was 18.5% less than that of their male peers. Female teachers exhibit greater concern for the fact that innate physical and psychological distinctions between men and women should be considered when establishing equality between the sexes. They reject the oversimplified view that men and women ought to attain identical status. According to a recent study, 66.4% of teachers advocate for equality of opportunity between men and women, while acknowledging the existence of different moral values for both genders. With regards to the notion that "women require more care", 74.5% of teachers suggest that it should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Meanwhile, 16.4% of teachers see this as a demonstration of equality between men and women, while 9.1% of teachers view it as a display of inequality between men and women. It is generally agreed among teachers that inherent physiological disparities

between men and women necessitate more care in certain circumstances. Based on the data presented above, it appears that many teachers possess only a surface-level understanding of gender equality and may not have considered it more deeply.

Furthermore, Xia's research (2007) revealed that a majority of female teachers are restricted by conventional gender roles. When discussing the topic of "whether the husband's income should surpass his wife's," 58.1% of teachers affirmed this sentiment, while 41.9% objected. Over 60% of teachers maintain that the primary responsibility for the mother is domestic, whereas for the father, it is occupational. Male teachers are more likely than their female counterparts to assign women's role in the family and delegate to men the role of being the 'strongest.' Half of female teachers consider that the most crucial task of a mother is to care for the family and educate children, while about 76.2% of male teachers hold that the most critical responsibility for a mother is to take care of the family and educate the children. Overall, 90% of educators believe that women can make career sacrifices for their families. Of those, 31.1% of female educators believe that it is unnecessary to sacrifice their careers for their families, while only 5.9% of male educators believe likewise. Male educators who believe it is necessary to give up for the sake of their family exceed female educators by 6.8%. Although some female educators aim to reject traditional family roles and enter the public sphere to establish their careers, the outlook is not promising.

Previous research in this field has demonstrated the existence of gender stereotypes in the discourse of Chinese basic education teachers. These stereotypes are manifested in teachers' differing expectations and educational methods for boys and girls. Furthermore, evidence of gender stereotypes was identified in the People's Education Press textbooks. This manifested in the uneven distribution of male and female roles and the imbalance of discourse power. This also implies that there are currently unacknowledged gender inequalities in China's basic education system. Due to the focus of current literature on teachers and textbooks, my research aims to connect these three elements: teachers, students, and textbooks, and observe their interaction. Moreover, there is a lack of analysis of the actual text content and discourse in

this type of research, with the majority relying on quantitative analysis to collect data. Therefore, this research will investigate the topic using a combination of critical discourse analysis and content analysis within a qualitative analysis framework.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research design

This study employs qualitative research to investigate gender stereotypes. A critical approach to qualitative research involves identifying patterns of meaning and examining their effects and implications (Braun & Clarke, 2022). As a researcher, it is necessary to explore the discourse used by participants to express their opinions and convey their intended meaning. This means in a practical level for this study that we bring this analytical perspective to examine the current situations and phenomena of Chinese society, explore the reasons behind them and understand the data. In this research, I interpret the words of the teachers and the content of the pictorial and textual references in textbooks and explore the emotional trends conveyed in them.

The study is designed in a way to allow one-on-one interviews with 20 teachers in two primary schools (Jiulong primary school and Nanzhou primary school) in Chongqing. The procedures for collecting this data will be detailed ahead. I conducted vocabulary statistics and macro-thematic analysis of the teachers' remarks during the interviews to analyse the types of gender stereotypes presented they presented. In addition, I conducted frequency statistics and content analysis of the Chinese textbooks published by the People's Education Press for grades 1-6 in primary school. This analysis involved comparing the ratio of men and women in different roles and situations, as well as exploring the gender stereotypes presented in the interaction between text and pictures. Furthermore, a questionnaire was distributed to 20 students. The results of the questionnaire indicated that gender stereotypes in teachers' discourse and textbook content do have an impact on students' ideas. Finally, I examine the changes in the gender representation of China presented in teachers' discourse. Despite the persistence of gender stereotypes, China's

gender equality process has made significant progress. Furthermore, I will briefly discuss the reasons for this gender equality trend.

FIGURE 2. Research design

Research design	
Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Send flyers to recruit 20 participating teachers. (Teaching experience requirement is 5-30 years) ▪ Buy PEP Chinese textbooks (grade 1 to grade 6) ▪ Send flyers to recruit 20 participating fifth grade students.
Sources of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One-on-one interviews with 20 teachers (selected from two primary schools in Chongqing) ▪ View PEP Chinese textbooks (grade 1 to grade 6) ▪ Questionnaires from 20 fifth grade students (selected from two primary schools in Chongqing)
Analytical approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher interviews- vocabulary statistics & macro-thematic analysis ▪ Textbooks- frequency statistics & content analysis ▪ Questionnaires-data statistics

2.2 Participants and research material

The study involved 10 teachers and 20 students from two primary schools in Chongqing, China. Participants were recruited through flyers distributed on campus. The classroom teachers selected for the study had between 5 and 30 years of teaching experience. These teachers all have bachelor's degrees. I will conduct one-on-one interviews with these teachers in Julong primary school and Nanzhou primary school of Chongqing in China. This range of experience was chosen as it is believed to have a more significant and lasting impact on students than teachers who are new to the profession. For this study, teachers were randomly selected regardless of their disciplines area. Disciplines were not considered to be salient factors in this study. Table 1 presents background information on the participating teachers, including their gender and teaching experience. To protect the privacy of the participants, their actual names will be replaced with numbers.

TABLE 1. Background information on the teachers interviewed

Participants	Gender	Teaching experience
No.1	Female	18 years
No.2	Female	25 years
No.3	Male	10 years
No.4	Female	22 years
No.5	Female	30 years
No.6	Female	25 years
No.7	Female	20 years
No.8	Female	8 years
No.9	Male	5 years
No.10	Male	11 years

Subsequently, I distributed questionnaires to the 20 students who had been recruited for the study. The analysis of the questionnaire results allows us to observe the impact of teachers' concepts and gender stereotypes in textbooks on primary school students. This is evidenced by the fact that the types of gender stereotypes presented in the teacher interviews and textbooks were also identified in the questionnaire survey of students. To ensure gender balance, ten male and ten female participants were chosen in these two schools (Jiulong primary school and Nanzhou primary school). Senior students were chosen for this study due to their autonomous thinking abilities, which allow them to easily adapt to the data collection process. Sixth-grade students were not chosen as they were preparing for the high school entrance examination during the data collection period and were unable to participate. Fifth-grade students were selected as they possess the necessary abilities and are not burdened with excessive academic obligations.

Finally, I analysed Chinese language textbooks for grades 1 to 6, published by the People's Education Press. The textbook is authored by Wen Rumin and other contributors. It comprises of 8 units, each with text, writing, speaking and activities sections that aim to enhance the four language learning skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. All textual and pictorial elements in the book are taken into account as part of the research data. As a crucial source of literary

material for primary school pupils, the value system evident in their Chinese textbooks can have a significant and nuanced effect on these pupils (Shiting,2022). To ensure comprehensive coverage of the most relevant data, I selected all 12 volumes of primary-level Chinese textbooks published by People's Education Press, encompassing two volumes per grade level. The study analysis excluded images that did not clearly depict a specific gender, such as unclear images and non-human images. Figure 1 is an example of an image that depicts unclear images. Because the specific character image cannot be seen clearly, it is excluded. Figure 2 shows a non-human image with a monkey as the main character, which is also excluded.

FIGURE 3. An example of unclear image



FIGURE 4. An example of non-human image



2.3 Data collection: instruments and procedures

Interview and questionnaire data were collected from Chongqing Jiulong Primary School and Nanzhou Primary School. Prior to the study, the researcher obtained signed interview consent forms from the principals of both schools. Additionally, the 10 participating teachers signed interview consent forms in both Chinese and English. From May 2022 to September 2022, face-to-face interviews were conducted offline. Each interview involved one interviewer and one participant. The interviews consisted of a series of questions covering topics such as gender ethos, academic achievement attributions, career stereotypes, transgenderism, and gender equality in education. The complete interview transcript can be found in Appendix A. The interview data comprised 10 interview transcripts in Chinese and English. (totalizing 40 pages of English text, written in Times New Rome 10, space 1.0; totalizing 71 pages of Chinese text, written in Songti 12, space 1.0). Interviews were transcribed in the participants' original language – Chinese.

During the same period, the researcher obtained signed consent forms and informed letters from the 20 primary school students who participated in the questionnaire survey. Then, the researcher distributed questionnaires to the 20 participating students, who completed them in their presence. The questionnaire mainly consisted of questions about gender temperament, academic achievements, career choices, transgenderism, and gender equality in campus life. The questions were designed to observe whether students' gender awareness would be affected by textbooks and teachers' discourse. The complete questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

This study focuses on the 121 articles that presented gender-related content found during the review of all Chinese language textbooks published by the People's Education Press. The researcher will select a portion of the original text and provide screenshots of the English translation and illustrations in the paper.

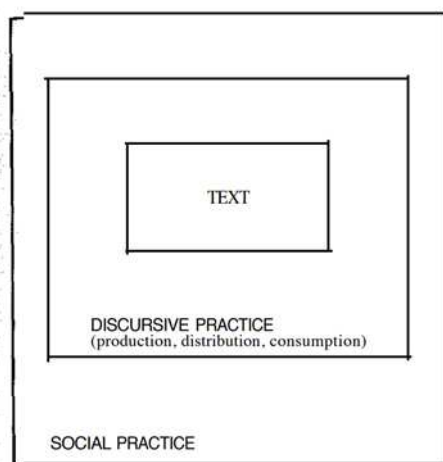
2.4 Data analysis

2.4.1 Three-dimensional conception of discourse

This study utilizes Fairclough's three-dimensional framework in critical discourse analysis as the overarching structure. This thesis systematically analyses the causal relationship between discursive practices, text and social and cultural structure. The aim is to bring the text to the dimension of social practice, to analyse how discourse practice and discourse are constructed in power struggles and produce ideological meaning in a particular cultural context, and to analyse how the relationship between discourse and society is maintained (Minghua, 2017), power and export hegemony (Jing, 2014). Fairclough pointed out that the essence of critical discourse analysis is to explore the representation and development of meaning through the ontological properties of language and discourse, thereby revealing certain ideological and power relations (Xuguang&Tianyu, 2019). It is generally believed that the analysis of the concept of 'discourse' began with the famous Swiss linguist Saussure. "Discourse" usually refers to dialogue or written text produced in a specific context, but it pays more attention to the social system of rules and ideology expressed through external forms such as text. In 1952, the American structuralist Z. S. Harris first proposed the term "discourse analysis" in a scholarly article published in the *Journal of Language*. Harris pointed out that "language does not appear as scattered words or sentences, but exists in the form of coherent discourse". He sought to use structuralist theory to study discourse dynamically, recognizing the importance of context in the production of language. Since then, discourse analysis has begun to emerge as a specialized research method. With the continuous deepening of discourse analysis research, researchers are paying more and more attention to the three-dimensional interactive relationship between people, language and reality. Discourse theory first became a tool to reveal the existence of social ideology and hegemony. All human knowledge is acquired through discourse, and nothing in the world can exist without discourse. Social entities and social relations are described and represented through discourse, and new methods of discourse play a constructive role in the former.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) scholar Fairclough combined the three analytical traditions of linguistics, macro-sociology, and micro-sociology to propose a discourse concept that includes three dimensions: text, discursive practice, and social practice, which is the so-called three-dimensional frame (Fairclough,2003). The specific structure of the three-dimensional framework is shown in Figure 3 (Fairclough,1992). In this framework, he emphasized that discourse analysis should focus on the social role of discourse, that is, creating various changes in discourse practice and making it an integral part of the design process related to social changes and cultural changes. (Fairclough, 2003) Discourse practice plays an important role in social practice that cannot be ignored. Therefore, when investigating any type of discourse, we must not only see its surface structure, but also the political, economic, and sociocultural environment behind the formation of a specific discourse. At the same time, we must not ignore the impact of the discourse construction itself on the social structure. and effect. The textual dimension focuses on the linguistic analysis of texts; The discursive practice dimension defines how textual production and interpretation processes operate, including which discursive strategies are employed and how they are integrated. The social practice dimension pertains to matters of interest within social analysis, including institutions, the organizational environment of discourse events, shaping the nature of discourse practice, and establishing the constructive impact of discourse (Fairclough, 1992).

FIGURE 5. Three-dimensional conception of discourse



Fairclough divides the methods of discourse analysis into 'non-critical methods' and 'critical methods'. This thesis chooses the critical method mainly because: the critical method is more inclined to penetrate the veneer of ideology and analyse the broad social and cultural aspects. The critical method is more likely to penetrate the veneer of ideology and analyse the broad social and cultural aspects, to interpret the true meaning of texts and discourses in everyday life, and to reveal the constructive role of discourse in social identity, social relations, and systems of knowledge and belief (Fairclough,2003).

This thesis will also select these three levels and the elements within them that are consistent with the core thinking of this article for further detailed discourse analysis.

In terms of text, I analysed teacher's interview transcripts and textbooks from three linguistic perspectives. I analysed the teacher interviews from vocabulary and thematic perspective, and I used content analysis and frequency statistics to analyse the textbook passages.

I will first describe the analysis steps for the teacher interviews.

Phase 1: Familiarizing myself with the data. I read all the interview data, and made a brief note of my thoughts.

Phase 2: Coding. At this stage I identified texts in the data as codes based on my research questions. These codes may be explicit surface meanings (e.g. I code "boys are stronger and brighter than girls" as boys are stronger and girls are weaker). It can also be a hidden meaning. (For example: "I code" if it is about rote memorizing, girls will be better, but in terms of understanding, boys will be better" as male achievements are attributed to innate ability and female achievements to acquired hard work.) I have created my codebook using these codes. The code is set to English. In my codebook, there were codes, definitions based on how the code

was being used in the data, and examples taken from the transcripts. All codebooks were entered into ATLAS, which is a useful piece of software to support the coding and analysis of qualitative data.

Phase 3: Generating core codes. Once I had coded all the data at ATLAS, I began to categories the codes into common features based on my research questions and generate core code.

Fairclough (1989) argues that the lexical structure of the text is based on the speaker's ideology and that the vocabulary in the discourse often best reflects the speaker's view of the real world. In terms of vocabulary, I presented the adjectives of ideal masculinity and femininity in the teachers' discourse; there were also presentations of some nouns, such as: the jobs the teachers think boys and girls are suitable for, the subjects they are good at, and the skills they have. In terms of themes, I decoded the interview transcripts to extract some common themes expressed in the teachers' words. Flexible application of thematic analysis allowed me to utilize an inductive approach (Braun & Clarke, 2022) that focused on patterned meaning, which informed by the values and assumptions of both the author and participants.

Phase 4: Review. During the coding process, I thoroughly reviewed the core code and provided clear and concise subtitles. When translating the data, I used a direct translation method while ensuring the meaning and characteristics of the original Chinese text were retained. I also provided necessary explanations and supplements to avoid confusion.

I will then explain the steps of textbook analysis.

Content analysis has been defined as a 'systematic method' of looking at texts for "what they are about" and "the elements in them" using quantitative analysis (Sunderland, 2011). In addition, Bock et al. (2011) confirmed that quantitative content analysis can provide objective and replicable results. The non-quantitative information in the text can be converted into quantitative data by constructing coding categories, and these data can be used to explain the content

and structural features of the text, and then to explore the hidden features or special meanings in the text. The key part of the content analysis method is to construct coding categories that are systematic, complete, reasonable, and applicable to all the samples analysed, and to interpret the units of analysis objectively and according to established standards. Therefore, this research method is appropriate for this study. When it comes to gender stereotyping study in education, content analysis always involves identifying particular categories (e.g. social roles), along with the frequency counting of these categories (Sunderland, 2011).

I will count the frequency of content about women raising children alone and content about men raising children alone. I will also count the frequency of male celebrities and female celebrities. I also analysed the interaction between text and images in textbooks to explore the gender content that the editor intends to present. For instance, the addition of pictures. The text does not mention the gender of the protagonist, but the accompanying illustrations depict a specific gender. Additionally, picture substitution occurs when an object replaces a character in an illustration, and picture deletion happens when both genders are present in the text but only one is depicted in the accompanying illustrations.

In discursive practices, texts can construct concepts and interpretations, while the interpreter may bring in other texts in various ways during the interpretation process, constantly enriching, transforming or reconstructing the interpretation. This process is known as intertextuality. Intertextuality analysis was first proposed by Julia Kristeva in the late 1960s, based on Bakhtin's theory of dialogue and polyphony. It is defined as the absorption and transformation of other texts, including rewriting, copying, imitation, and collage of past texts. Fairclough's intertextual analysis, based on Julia Kristeva's research, is a crucial aspect of critical discourse analysis. This approach considers the text's ability to produce meaning and transform discourse, allowing for a deeper understanding of one discourse through the lens of another (Fairclough,2003).

The core thinking point of this section is: Does teachers' discourse and textbook content affect students' gender awareness through intertextuality?

French discourse analysis Scholars divide intertextuality into clearly marked “explicit intertextuality” and unclearly marked “constructive intertextuality”. The impact of teachers' discourse and textbook content on students' gender awareness is achieved through explicit intertextuality. It has been found through analysis. The researcher integrated key thematic discourses about gender stereotypes conveyed in teachers' discourse and textbook content, and developed questionnaires and distributed them to 10 boys and 10 girls. The results showed that most participating students recognized most of these thematic discourses with gender stereotypes. This highlights the potential impact of gender stereotypes on students' gender awareness through the two media of teachers and textbooks.

In the social practice section, I will examine the realistic portrayal presented in the current discourse construction and investigate the reasons for changes in discourse. These include the influence of national will, the advancement of the economy, and the increased coverage of women's issues in mass media.

2.5 Ethics

Several ethical issues were considered. According to Data Management Guidelines (FSD), data in this research contain identifiers relating to research subject's students, colleagues and other third parties. The participants were all voluntary and could withdraw at any time without penalty. Before the interviews began, all parties involved in the study signed an interview consent form, and the topic and purpose of the study were explained. To ensure the privacy of all participants, the interviewer strictly followed the interview protocol and clarified any unclear questions or content.

The data's integrity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the research process, with participants' names replaced by numbers to protect their identities.

2.6 Data management

The original interview transcripts were protected by authentication systems, in which only researchers can access to the data. Then I downloaded the data to my computer, which is protected by passwords and nobody else has access to it. After the research project, all forms of data kept in my computer will be deleted and destroyed.

3 FINDINGS

3.1 Text: teacher interview analysis

In this chapter I will answer my Q1 on vocabulary and thematic level. At the vocabulary level, I will show how teachers use different adjectives when describing ideal masculinity and ideal femininity. Teachers have completely different views on the subject performance, suitable careers and abilities of boys and girls. At the thematic level, I summarized and classified the gender stereotypes presented in the teachers' discourse and finally formed the following sub-themes: the rationality of traditional gender concepts; men are strong and women are weak; it's shameful for boys to vent his emotions; girls should have higher moral and behavioural standards; negative behaviour by boys is tolerated; boys' achievements are attributed to innate abilities; girls' achievements are attributed to hard work; being transgender is a disease. I have also summarized the teachers' views on gender-related content in society and education. These include the following topics: reducing gender differences in temperament; gender equality in basic education; gender equality in primary education;

3.1.1 Gender stereotype in vocabulary level.

FIGURE 6. Vocabulary level

Vocabulary level	
Adjective statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adjectives of describing ideal masculinity and ideal femininity.
Nouns statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Skills that boys and girls are good at .
Nouns statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Career expectations of boys and girls.

An analysis of the vocabulary of ideal femininity and ideal masculinity that appears in the discourse of the teachers interviewed (see Table 2) shows that there are more expectations and richer types of ideal female temperament. Among them, the most frequent words are 'empathetic', 'gentle' and 'obedient', with a total of 4 times each. This is followed by 'elegant' with a total of 3 mentions. Statistics show that expectations of femininity focus mainly on a character that is not sharp and can provide positive emotional value to others. Altruism is a typical characteristic of the ideal female character in teachers' discourse.

Looking back at the data on ideal masculinity (see Table 2), the expectations for temperament types are much simpler than those for women. The most common words are 'responsible', 'lively' and 'strong', each appearing a total of 5 times. This is followed by "brave", 4 times in total. These adjectives suggest that men are expected to be protagonists and strong in the public sphere. The ideal masculinity in teachers' discourse tends to be 'self-interested' and a character who can get achievements in the public sphere.

TABLE 2. Ideal masculinity and ideal femininity

Ideal femininity(types)	Frequency of occurrence (times)	Ideal masculinity(types)	Frequency of occurrence (times)
Empathetic	4	Responsible	5
Gentle	4	Lively	5
Obedient	4	Strong	5

Elegant	3	Brave	4
Confident	2	Staunch	3
Quiet	2	Empathetic	2
Cautious	2	Hardworking	1
Kind	1	Humbly	1
Virtuous	1	Integrity	1
Independent	1	Total:9	Total:27
Reserved	1		
Lively	1		
Well-educated	1		
Well-behaved	1		
Total:14	Total:28		

I also counted the types of abilities that appeared in the teachers' discourse and how often they appeared (see Table 3). This shows the interviewed teachers' unconscious judgments about the abilities of boys and girls. There is a strong sense of personal subjectivity in these judgements and therefore gender stereotypes. However, these gender-stereotyped ability predictions in teachers' consciousness will have psychological effects on children in daily classroom activities and are likely to have a negative impact on children's self-confidence and enthusiasm for learning.

The most significant difference appears in the areas of artistic perception and logical thinking. 9 out of 10 respondents believe that girls have stronger artistic perception. None of the respondents thought that boys had superior artistic ability, and only one insisted that artistic talent had nothing to do with gender. On the contrary, when it comes to logical thinking, 7 teachers believe that boys' minds are more logical. And only 2 teachers support girls. Only one teacher think that the two groups have similar abilities.

TABLE 3. Statistics on the skills that boys and girls are good at

Skills	Girls are better at it (people)	Boys are better at it (people)	Both are almost the same (people)	Regardless of gender (people)
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Concentration	6	0	0	4
Memory	3	0	3	4
Language	5	0	1	4
Oral expression	4	1	1	4
Logical thinking	2	7	1	0
Physical quality	0	9	1	0
Artistic perception	9	0	0	1

The study includes the interviewed teachers' predictions about the ideal careers of boys and girls. Table 4 shows that the most commonly predicted ideal occupation for men is soldier, appearing five times in total. The next most predicted occupation is astronaut, appearing four times in total, followed by scientists and doctors, each appearing three times. In contrast, actresses were the most commonly predicted ideal career for girls, appearing five times in total. Followed by teachers, appearing 4 times. Next comes the dancer, who appears 3 times.

It can be seen that in the discourse of the teachers interviewed, ideal careers for men are mostly physically demanding and intellectually demanding. These professions are all high-impact jobs that can set off waves in the public sector, are an important driving force for the development of a society, and have very generous rewards. This also highlights the high expectations placed on men to occupy a place among the elite. However, the predicted ideal careers for women are mostly jobs with high appearance requirements, or educational and clerical jobs with high stability and low income. Women are expected to use their appearance to provide aesthetic experiences to others, especially men. Women are expected to have characteristics that please others, rather than focusing on their own social value. This is also an implicit objectification of women. In addition, educational positions with childcare significance and secretarial positions with auxiliary significance are also be considered as ideal career representatives for women. It can be seen that women are expected to work in the private sphere and develop a sense of belonging to work in the private sphere under the subtle influence of teachers' discourse and other media. This means that although

women are passively placed in the private sphere, they are also expected to be content in the private sphere.

TABLE 4. Career expectations for boys and girls

Male occupation (types)	Frequency (times)	Female occupation(types)	Frequency (times)
Soldier	5	Actress	5
Astronaut	4	Teacher	4
Scientist	3	Dancer	3
Doctor	3	Secretarial	2
Teacher	2	Fashion designer	1
Police	1	Artist	1
Game designer	1	Doctor	1
Total: 7		Musician	1
		Soldier	1
		Total: 9	

3.1.2 Gender stereotype in thematic level

FIGURE 7. Thematic level

Thematic level	
Theme 1: Men are strong and women are weak	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male should take care of female 2. Women are not suitable for dangerous jobs 3. Men are not suitable for caregiving jobs 4. Boys are not be encouraged to express negative emotion 5. Recognition of traditional masculinity as represented by 'manliness' 6. Recognition of traditional femininity represented by "quietness and obedience"
Theme 2 : Gender stereotypes related to negative behavior of students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High tolerance for male negative behaviour 2. Strict requirements for female behaviour
Theme 3 : Gender stereotypes related to achievement attribution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Male achievements were attributed to talent and intelligence 2. Female achievements are attributed to hard work or early maturity
Theme 4 : Negative emotions towards transgender people	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not comfortable with trans people 2. Recognition of the consistency between physical gender and social gender 3. Treatment is needed for trans people

This thematic category of gender stereotype in teacher's discourse is composed of four central ideas. Firstly, gender stereotypes are reflected in the perception of 'strong men and weak women'. Gender stereotypes also exist in negative behaviour and achievement attributions. Finally, negative emotions towards transgender people are also an important component of gender stereotypes in teachers' discourse. To further explain the ideas behind this theme, I will explain each of the sub-categories in detail in the following sections.

Theme 1: Men are strong and women are weak

Men are naturally strong and women are naturally weak. This stereotype is deeply rooted in the minds of most people who have grown up in a patriarchal society. Although there is a general difference in physical strength between men and women, this does not mean that women are disadvantaged in all aspects of life. After decoding the teachers' words, it was found that the theme of 'strong men and weak women' is mainly reflected in the following aspects: male should take care of female; women are not suitable for dangerous jobs; men are not suitable for caregiving jobs; There is shame in men expressing their emotions; identification of traditional masculinity and femininity.

TABLE 5. Men are strong and women are weak

Sub-themes	Sample Codes	Frequency Across Transcripts	Code Frequency	Definition	Example Excerpt
Male should take care of female.	show humility to female, be responsible of girl, be soft to wife and children	3/10	6	Refers to men should prioritize and care for women, including taking the initiative to assist with their heavy work, showing humility towards them, and being soft in their presence.	Boys must take responsibility and show humility to their female classmates.
Women are not suitable for dangerous jobs.	girls just do a civilian job, girls are not able to do what boys do, girls' physical condition are more suitable for clerical jobs	2/10	3	Refers to the fact that women's physical condition is weak and they are not suitable for more dangerous jobs, such as police officers, firefighters, etc., but are more	There is a division of labour between boys and girls, and girls will not be able to do what boys do.

Men are not suitable for caregiving jobs.	shameful for boys to be in job of caring people, it's strange for boy to be a nurse, others may have a biased view, might be embarrassed when talking about his job, the income in this industry is relatively low, and men have to support their families	4/10	7	suitable for office work.	Refers to men are often discouraged from pursuing care-related jobs, such as nursing, due to societal stigma.	It's a bit shameful for boys to be in the job of caring for people.
Boys are not be encouraged to express negative emotion.	boys don't have fragile emotions, it's embarrassing for a man to shed tears, a boy cannot cry casually, didn't look like a man, traditional cultures require boys to be stronger and braver, boys bleed but not shed tears, a little boy who cried a lot but I changed him.	8/10	14	Refers to the boys who express negative emotion such as crying are not be accepted.	I definitely told him not to cry. Men don't shed tears easily. It's very embarrassing for a boy to shed tears.	

Recognition of traditional masculinity as represented by 'manliness'.	boys have been pampered since childhood are not strong and brave enough, too soft-spoken are called sissy, boys should still be more masculine, you don't look like a boy if you are gentle and soft.	3/10	5	Refers to the recognition that masculinity is a necessary quality for boys.	Boys nowadays are not masculine anymore. Those who have been pampered since childhood are not strong and brave enough.
Recognition of traditional femininity represented by "quietness and obedience".	good qualities for girls, parents pamper these girls who are particularly aggressive, will be a great help for future development , talking too much is not popular, will not face danger if girls abide by rules ,educate her that girls should be quiet	4/10	10	Refers to the recognition that quietness and obedience are necessary qualities for girls.	I think girls need obedience and quietness. These are good qualities for girls.

Sub-theme 1: Male should take care of female.

People who have the concept that "men are strong and women are weak" will automatically assume that men play the role of protectors and women automatically play the role of the protected. Therefore, in teachers' discourse, this

manifests itself in the demand that boys should do more and more heavy work, or even take over the work of girls.

“Boys must be responsible. For example, if a girl in our class is closing the window but can't close it, and the boys are watching, I will say: "Hey, how can a boy just stand and look at girls?"

(男孩子一定要有点责任心。例如，如果我们班的一个女生正在关窗却关不上，而男生在旁边看着，我就会说：“哎，男生怎么能站着看女生呢？”)

Male are expected to take care of female not only behaviourally but also emotionally. Emotional care includes speaking in a gentle tone and not arguing with women.

“Masculinity is very much needed, especially when socializing with others. When you are bullied, you still have to be masculine. But at home, when facing your own family, wife and children, be a little soft.”

(男性气质是非常需要的，尤其是在与他人交往时。当你被欺负的时候，你还是要有点男子气概。但在家里，面对自己的家人、妻子和孩子时，要柔软一点。)

Sub-theme 2: Women are not suitable for dangerous jobs

This stereotype also extends to career choices. Girls are expected to work in safer and more stable jobs. They are considered too weak for jobs that require greater physical strength, agility and flexibility. During interviews, some teachers expressed concerns about girls pursuing careers in traditionally male-dominated fields such as policing and firefighting. It was suggested that office work is often viewed as the most suitable career option for girls.

“There is a division of labour between boys and girls, and girls will not be able to do what boys do. For example, rescuing people and putting out fires are all boys' business. How could a girl do this? Men and women have differences in strength, height, and other aspects. Therefore, boys are still suitable for this type of job. Girls are more suitable for clerical jobs. I think girls' physical conditions are suitable for clerical jobs.”

(男孩和女孩之间有分工，男孩做的事女孩就做不了。比如救人、救火都是男孩子的事。一个女孩怎么能做出这样的事？男性和女性在力量、身高等方面都有差异。所以，男生还是适合这类工作的。女生更适合从事文职工作。我觉得女生的身体条件更适合做文职工作。)

Sub-theme 3: Men are not suitable for caregiving jobs.

After expressing doubts about girls taking on physically demanding and risky jobs, boys who aspire to take up care and childcare jobs are being criticized even more. For example: nurses, teachers, etc. are all representative professions. Men who engage in such work are considered shameful.

“It's a bit strange for a boy to be a nurse. According to traditional culture, it is still a bit shameful for a man to take care of others.”

(一个男孩当护士有点奇怪。按照传统文化，一个男人照顾别人还是有点丢人的。)

“If a boy is a teacher, others may have a biased view.”

(如果一个男孩是一名老师，其他人可能会有偏见。)

In addition, some teachers consider the low salary of this type of work to be the main reason why it is not suitable for men. Because traditionally, men have been viewed as the primary providers for their families. It is important to note that this evaluation is subjective. Although many women in modern times actively participate in social affairs and have financial resources. In certain marriages, the wife's salary may exceed that of her husband. The concept that men are the primary labour force is still prevalent in the minds of some Chinese people.

“Because I think a boy working as a nurse might be embarrassed when talking about his job. Moreover, there is also the issue of income. The income in this industry is relatively low, and men have to support their families.”

(因为我认为一个当护士的男孩在谈论他的工作时可能会感到尴尬。此外，还有收入问题。这个行业收入比较低，男人要养家糊口。)

Sub-theme 4: Boys are not encouraged to express negative emotion

During the process of male socialization, boys are often expected to conform to certain unrealistic and harsh standards of masculinity. For instance, exhibiting vulnerability is often viewed as a sign of weakness. Crying, which is a natural way of releasing negative emotions, is almost taboo. This is exemplified by a Chinese

proverb that states, 'A man would rather bleed than shed tears.' Men who cry are often stigmatized as being weak or effeminate. The teacher's words suggest that crying to release negative emotions is viewed as a feminine behaviour, and that men exhibiting such behaviour are deemed shameful. Therefore, suppressing tears is deemed an essential aspect of boys' education.

“Boys bleed but do not shed tears. This is the education I have been given since childhood. Traditional culture still requires boys to be strong.”

（男孩会流血，但不会流泪。这是我从小接受的教育。传统文化仍然要求男孩要坚强。）

“When I saw a little boy crying, my first reaction was that he didn't look like a man. A man must be strong and learn to deal with problems by himself. This is called a man.”

（当我看到一个小男孩哭的时候，我的第一反应是他看起来不像一个男人。一个人必须坚强，学会自己处理问题。这才叫男人。）

“I think it's normal for girls to cry. But boys should be stronger in general things.”

（我觉得女生哭是很正常的事情。但男孩在一般事情上应该更强大。）

Sub-theme 5: Recognition of traditional masculinity as represented by 'manliness'
In Chinese culture, there is an idiom called 'masculinity', which refers to a positive spirit, a generous and open-minded demeanour, adherence to the correct code of conduct, and upright words and deeds. As men were the main participants in public affairs in ancient Chinese society, masculinity has always been considered an essential temperament characteristic of Chinese men. There are many ancient Chinese literary works that praise masculine men, such as the 'Book of Southern Qi Literature Biography Bian Bin', which states: 'My father Yanzhi who are masculinity, and he was the order of Shang Yu.' At the same time, some literary works also criticize men who lack masculinity, such as 'A Dream of Red Mansions.' In Chapter 66, it is written that 'Baoyu does not practice writing or

martial arts daily, is afraid of meeting people, and only enjoys causing trouble among the girls. Additionally, he lacks masculinity.'

However, it is important to acknowledge that every individual has a unique personality, and not all individuals identify with or aspire to traditional masculine traits. As society progresses, women are increasingly participating in public life and men are also exploring more private pursuits. The concept of masculinity should not be used to restrict or define individuals based on gender. It is crucial to avoid perpetuating harmful gender stereotypes that suggest men must conform to traditional masculine norms. However, some teachers still consider the cultivation of masculinity to be a necessary aspect of boys' education, based on their feedback.

“Boys nowadays are sometimes too soft-spoken. I always feel like they are being called a 'sissy'. Boys should be different from girls, and being more masculine is one way to do that.”

(现在的男孩子有时说话太轻声细语了。我总觉得他们被称为‘娘娘腔’。男孩应该与女孩不同，而变得更有男子气概是做到这一点的一种方法。)

“Boys nowadays are not masculine anymore. Those who have been pampered since childhood are not strong and brave enough.”

(现在的男孩子已经没有男子气概了。从小被宠坏了，都不够坚强和勇敢。)

Sub-theme 6: Recognition of traditional femininity represented by "quietness and obedience"

In ancient China's feudal society, education was a privilege reserved for very few women. For a long time, women were excluded from political and economic activities, and their lives were mostly confined to the family, where they played a supporting role to men. Consequently, women were expected to embody traits such as quietness and obedience, which were deemed essential for their safety. For instance, the traditional text 'Rite and Weed Zixia Biograph' states that women are expected to obey men. It says: "A woman has three obediences, and there is no special way. Therefore, she obeys her father before she is married, she obeys her husband when she is married, and she obeys her son after her husband's death." The book 'Zhou Li Tian Guan Nei Zai' also states that women should possess a gentle and quiet character. It advises them to be composed,

pure, and tranquil, maintain their integrity, and keep themselves tidy. Although modern society has abandoned the strict anti-female requirements of classical literature, the expectation for girls to be quiet and obedient still persists. Based on interviews with teachers, it is evident that some teachers have a favorable view of quiet and sensible girls, while holding a negative view of those with a rebellious spirit.

“Nowadays, there are few children in the family, and the parents pamper these girls, who are particularly aggressive. Unlike the girls of our time, who were very gentle and considerate.”

(现在家里孩子少了，父母又宠着这些女孩子，特别有攻击性。不像我们那个时代的女孩子，她们非常温柔体贴。)

“Girls should be more sensible, whether it is future development or long-term growth, it will be of great help. Quietness is also needed, because you talk too much in the classroom and are not very popular in the class. It will be the same in workplaces in the future. Talking too much is actually not popular in most workplaces. You still have to learn to be quiet wherever you go.”

(女孩子应该懂事一点，无论是以后的发展，还是长远的成长，都会有很大的帮助。安静也是需要的，因为你在课堂上说话太多，在班上不太受欢迎。未来的社会工作也是如此。太多的谈话实际上在大多数职场中并不受欢迎。无论走到哪里，你还是要学会保持安静。)

Theme 2: Gender stereotypes related to negative behaviour of students

After decoding the transcripts of teacher interviews, the researchers found that teachers may adopt different methods of handling negative student behaviours, such as swearing and physical conflicts, based on the gender of the students. Specifically, teachers tend to be more tolerant of negative behaviours exhibited by boys, while imposing stricter requirements on girls' behaviours.

TABLE 6. Gender stereotypes related to negative behaviour

Sub-themes	Sample Codes	Frequency Across Transcripts	Code Frequency	Definition	Example Excerpt
High tolerance for	it's easier to accept swearing	6/10	11	Refers to boys engaging in	I'm more tolerant of a bad word

male negative behaviour.	from boys, it's okay for boys to fight			negative behaviours that are considered acceptable and normal by teachers.	spoken by a boy.
Strict requirements for female behaviour.	gentle and quiet girls are more lovable in traditional culture, girl should maintain elegant posture, good conduct and pure character, girls fight is irritable, rather than like some wild boy, it is harsher when girls say dirty words, girls who are too boisterous are more off-putting	9/10	22	Refers to the teacher's intolerance of girls engaging in negative behaviours, such as swearing or fighting.	However, if a girl speaks dirty words, I feel very harsh and disgusted.

Sub-theme 1: High tolerance for male negative behaviour

All interviewed teachers believed that boys are more likely to engage in negative behaviours than girls. This means that boys are more likely to insult or fight with

others. Despite being aware of gender stereotypes in how they deal with students' negative behaviours, most of the interviewed teachers still expressed a tolerant attitude towards boys' negative behaviours.

“In fact, it is wrong for both boys and girls to use swear words, but it seems that we generally think that it is normal for boys to say swear words to each other, and good brothers will also use swear words to tease each other, so we think it is okay.”

(其实无论男生还是女生说脏话都是错误的，但似乎我们普遍认为男生互相说脏话是很正常的，好兄弟也会用脏话来调侃对方，所以我们认为没关系。)

Some of the interviewed teachers would justify their differential treatment by attributing a boy's negative behaviour to his natural instincts or energetic and impulsive personality traits. The tolerant attitude of society towards men's negative behaviour has also become a reason for teachers.

“Because boys are livelier and more energetic, and they don't pay too much attention to the safety of themselves and others. So sometimes the slapstick movements are too big, and there will be a lot of contradictions.”

(因为男孩子比较活泼，比较有活力，不太注重自己和别人的安全。所以有时候打闹动作太大了，就会出现很多矛盾。)

“It's not right for boys to say bad words, but I feel like society is more tolerant of this behaviour.”

(男生说脏话是不对的，但我觉得社会对这种行为比较宽容。)

Sub-theme 2: Strict requirements for female behaviour.

During the interviews, many teachers expressed a strong dislike towards negative behaviours exhibited by female students. When discussing the topic of girls using profanity, some teachers immediately frowned and reacted with emotional language, using words such as 'disgusting', 'uneducated', and 'rude'.

“I find it harsher when girls say dirty words. She doesn't look like a girl at all. Very uneducated and rude.”

(当女孩说脏话时，我觉得我会更严厉。她看起来根本不像一个女孩。非常没教养而且粗鲁。)

It is commonly believed that girls are born with an elegant temperament and good character, and that they should regard these qualities as lifelong pursuits to continuously cultivate and improve themselves.

“Because I think girls must have an elegant temperament, good conduct, and a pure character.”

(因为我认为女孩子必须要有优雅的气质、良好的品行、纯洁的品格。)

Some teachers even regulate the body posture of female students, instructing them to maintain an attractive posture at all times, whether standing or sitting.

“I will tell her what kind of sitting posture a girl should maintain.”

(我会告诉她女孩应该保持什么样的坐姿。)

The behavioural expectations for women are attributed to the standards set for them in traditional Chinese culture.

“I'm more disgusted when I hear girls say dirty words, because girls should be more reserved and shouldn't learn that kind of words. Maybe it's tradition.”

(当我听到女孩子说脏话时我更反感，因为女孩子应该矜持一点，不应该学那种话语。也许这就是传统。)

Theme 3: Gender stereotypes related to achievement attribution

Teachers' differential treatment of boys and girls is also reflected in the attribution of academic performance and achievements. Research has shown that teachers often attribute boys' excellent academic performance to superior intelligence and extraordinary talent, while girls' lack of achievements is attributed to hard work and precociousness.

TABLE 7. Gender stereotypes related to achievement attribution

Sub-themes	Sample Codes	Frequency Across Transcripts	Code Frequency	Definition	Example Excerpt
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Male achievements were attributed to talent and intelligence.	boys are brighter than girls, boys are physically stronger than girls, boys are better at thinking, boys are more accomplished, grow faster than girls if persists	6/10	11	Refers to the fact that boys with excellent academic performance are considered to be naturally smart and have stronger thinking ability and better physical condition than girls.	Boys have better thinking skills.
Female achievements are attributed to hard work or early maturity.	girls better at rote memorization, girls more diligent than men, girls are mature earlier, girls are more disciplined	6/10	7	Refers to the good academic performance of girls because they mature earlier than boys, work harder and are more self-disciplined.	In terms of logical thinking, girls are also better, because girls mature earlier.

Sub-theme 1: Male achievements were attributed to talent and intelligence

The belief that boys are inherently more intelligent is often reflected in teachers' expectations that boys will excel in subjects that require logical thinking, such as mathematics, while disregarding individual differences in academic performance across different areas. Additionally, boys are often expected to achieve greater success in their future careers than girls, despite the lack of evidence to support this prediction.

“Boys are better at math because they think better. Think faster too.”

（男孩数学更好，因为他们思考得更好。想得也快一点。）

“When boys grow up, they may be more accomplished.”

（男孩长大后，可能会更有成就。）

Sub-theme 2: Female achievements are attributed to hard work or early maturity
According to teachers, girls perform better than boys or at least at the same level in some aspects. This is believed to be due to their self-discipline and hard work. Additionally, girls tend to mature psychologically earlier than boys, which means they understand reason and demonstrate self-control earlier, particularly in primary school. However, girls' academic performance advantage gradually lags behind that of boys after primary school, as they only benefit from the time advantage of growing up. Surprisingly, none of the interviewed teachers attributed the girls' outstanding performance to their intelligence.

“Because most girls are more disciplined, they are more able to calm down and devote themselves to studying.”

（因为大多数女孩都比较自律，所以更能静下心来潜心学习。）

“When girls reach the senior stage, their thinking is not as broad as boys.”

（女生到了高级阶段，思维就没有男生那么广阔了。）

This stereotype of attributing women's achievements may be followed when they enter the workplace as adults. Some teachers interviewed emphasized that men's laziness is one of the reasons why women make up the majority in management when discussing the workplace promotion of primary school teachers.

“Women also have greater opportunities to advance to management positions in the education industry. Because women are more diligent than men and men are lazier.”

（女性还有更多机会晋升到教育行业的管理职位。因为女孩比男孩更勤奋，而男孩则更懒。）

Theme 4: Negative emotions towards transgender people

Teachers' gender stereotypes are reflected not only in prejudice and harsh requirements for men and women but also in prejudice against individuals who do not conform to the binary gender category. The study found that almost all surveyed teachers strongly endorsed the binary gender model and held a negative attitude towards non-binary gender models. The discussion of transgender people's views is the most representative example. This includes discomfort when dealing with transgender people and recognition of the consistency between physical gender and social gender. Also, correction and treatment is necessary for transgender people.

TABLE 8. Negative emotions towards transgender people

Sub-themes	Sample Codes	Frequency Across Transcripts	Code Frequency	Definition	Example Excerpt
Not comfortable with trans people	I feel uncomfortable, I feel repelled, I do not feel good about it, weird, some obstacles in getting along, I cannot accept them, abnormal, this is very bad	7/10	14	Refers to be difficult to build relationships with transgender individuals, and some teachers may choose to avoid contact with them.	I would feel uncomfortable.
Recognition of the consistency between physical gender and social gender.	should follow gender image define by society, boys should behave like boys , girls should behave like girls, one of sexes should be selected, I hope	4/10	9	Refers to the belief that an individual's social gender identity should align with their biological sex.	Let him return to his own gender track.

	to guide children to develop towards the normative temperament of their own gender				
Treatment is needed for trans people	guide them out of abnormal state, respond to his own body gender, see if medical treatment is needed, should be corrected it, use medical means to make judgments, education must be provided, provide positive guidance, should go to some psychiatrists, guide towards own body, gender and temperament, return to his own gender track	7/10	13	Refers to the belief that transgender people are pathological and need psychological intervention to treat and correct them.	See if there is any way to help this child, for example: suggest visiting a psychiatrist, etc.

Sub-theme 1: Not comfortable with trans people

Most of the interviewed teachers expressed respect for the transgender community, acknowledging each individual's right to follow their own heart. However, they still face obstacles in getting along, which can manifest as physical

rejection and discomfort. The closer one is to a transgender person, the stronger these negative emotions can become. For instance, the experience of having a transgender family member may be more challenging than having a transgender co-worker. Similarly, having a transgender child may present unique challenges compared to having other family members who are transgender.

“I feel a little uncomfortable, so I can only remain respectful. But there are definitely some obstacles in getting along.”

(我心里有些不舒服，只能保持恭敬。但相处中肯定会遇到一些障碍。)

“I'm a little bit repelled. But everyone is an individual, I don't think any of us can stop him from doing what he wants to do.”

(我有点排斥。我认为我们任何人都不能阻止他做他想做的事情。)

Sub-theme 2: Recognition of the consistency between physical gender and social gender

Most of the interviewed teachers believe that individuals should identify with their physical gender and choose appropriate behaviours to participate in social activities based on their gender. This means that a man must display socially expected masculine characteristics, such as wearing masculine clothing, rather than feminine clothing, such as skirts. Displaying traditionally masculine traits, such as bravery and strength, rather than tenderness and vulnerability. Some of the teachers interviewed also expressed their support for body gender to be consistent with social gender, as this is a model encouraged by the current mainstream culture in society. That is, the mainstream culture of society has determined what is more beautiful, and people have to follow that rule.

“If this society has defined a more beautiful gender image, then we should follow it. I still hope that everyone can have a gender image that is compliant, healthy, normal, and in line with the mainstream of this society.”

(如果这个社会已经定义了更加美好的性别形象，那么我们就应该遵循它。我还是希望每个人都能拥有一个顺从的、健康的、正常的、符合这个社会主流的性别形象。)

The promotion of binary gender also leads to sexual minorities, such as transgender people, being seen as unconventional and pathological.

“The reason for deviating from one's own gender may be that there was no good guidance at home or at school when I was a child, which ultimately led to this morbid state.”

(之所以会偏离自己的性别，可能是小时候家里或者学校没有很好的引导，最终导致了这种病态的状态。)

Sub-theme 3: Treatment is needed for trans people

Transgender people are often judged as pathological because they do not conform to the gender temperament model defined by mainstream culture. Therefore, according to most of the teachers interviewed, medical treatment and psychological intervention have become their main responses when dealing with transgender students.

“I will also tell parents that when they can't solve it themselves, they should go to some psychiatrists to see if they can correct it.”

(我也会告诉家长，当自己解决不了的时候，就应该去找一些心理医生，看看能不能纠正。)

Even though "gender incongruence" has been excluded from the classification of mental disorders in the 11th edition of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-11), to be published by the World Health Organization in 2022. And only when transgender people themselves experience negative emotions such as anxiety, do they need to receive appropriate psychological counselling and help based on their own wishes. However, the wishes of transgender children were clearly not taken into account in the discourse of most of the teachers interviewed.

“My reaction must be to guide him, persuade him, correct him. His parents will be notified. We will work with his parents to correct him.”

(我的反应一定是引导他、说服他、纠正他。他的父母将会收到通知。我们将与他的父母一起纠正他。)

3.2 Text: textbook analysis

Another key object in this study is the People's Education Press Chinese textbooks for grades one to six. Individual text passages in the textbooks were the primary sample for this study. According to the statistics, among the selected samples, 121 articles were related to gender. According to the statistics (see Table 9), there are 18 texts in the textbooks that describe women engaged in private affairs. These affairs include women raising children alone and doing housework. There were only six articles describing men involved in private affairs.

It is evident that textbook compilers presuppose that women will primarily work in the private sector when selecting articles for textbooks. While male characters do appear in private work situations, their main activities involve outdoor scenes such as climbing mountains with their children, walking, and going to sea, which require less parenting energy and are more recreational in nature. In contrast, women's work is predominantly indoors, such as in the home, and often involves tedious tasks that require significant time and energy, such as housework and cooking.

TABLE 9. Texts of women and men work in the private sphere.

Texts of women work in the private sphere	Texts of men work in the private sphere
"Chubby Little Hands"	"Qianren Cake"
"Zongzi for Dragon Boat Festival"	"Father, Woods and Birds"
"Stationery House"	"That will definitely be better"
"A Letter"	"Climbing Tiandu Peak"
"Mom Asleep"	"Amber"
"Bird on a Boat"	"The Biggest Book"
"I became a tree"	
"Walking with the Moon"	
"My apricot is ripe"	

"The Daughter of the Sea"
 "Osmanthus Rain"
 "Begging for Cleverness"
 "Motherly Love"
 "Moon Trail"
 "Laba Porridge"
 "That Sunday"
 "School of Flowers"
 "Hope"

In order to create role models for students, the textbook selects a large number of celebrity stories with positive social impact, including revolutionary heroes, political leaders, outstanding figures in various fields, etc. The text also covers famous women such as heroines and celebrities, but the proportion is small. From a data perspective, there are 50 texts describing male celebrities and only 5 texts describing female celebrities (see Table 10).

TABLE 10. Text describing male celebrities and female celebrities.

Text describing male celebrities	Text describing female celebrities
"Don't forget the man who dug the well when you're drinking water"	"Liu Hulan"
"Cao Chong weighs the elephant"	"A Large Porcelain Bowl"
"Wang Erxiao"	"I shouldn't break my promise"
"Up on the Octagon"	"The Story of Jingwei"
"Zhu De's Carrying Pole"	"Nuwa Mends the Sky"
"The Unforgettable Water Splashing Festival"	
"Dayu Controlled Floods"	
"Grandpa Deng Xiaoping Planting Trees"	
"Uncle Lei Feng, where are you"	
"Houyi shot down nine suns"	
"The Legend of the Yellow Emperor"	
"Li Shizhen"	
"Ask if you don't understand"	
"Sima Guang"	
"Grey bird"	

"The operating table is the battlefield"
"A Painting Famous at Home and Abroad"
"Pangu Created the World"
"Prometheus"
"Long long ago"
"Learning for the Rise of China"
"Mei Lanfang Grows a Beard"
"Ximen Bao Manages Ye"
"Bian Que heals the patient"
"Ji Chang learns archery"
"A Little Hero Named Yulai"
"Huang Jiguang"
"Motherland, I'm finally back"
"The Disaster of the Normandy"
"The General and the Prime Minister"
"Hunter Hailibu"
"Borrowing Arrows from Straw Boats"
"Loyal Bones Are Buried Everywhere in the
Green Mountains"
"God of Soldiers"
"Poverty"
"Tian Ji participates in horse racing"
"The Five Heroes of Langya Mountain"
"My Comrade Qiu Shaoyun"
"Bo Ya Plays the Guqin"
"My Uncle Mr. Lu Xun"
"Some people"
"Memories from Sixteen Years Ago"
"Dong Cunrui sacrificed his life to blow up the
bunker"
"Chairman Mao in Hua Mountain"
"Farewell to the Prime Minister on Long
Street"
"Great Friendship"
"Truth is born after a hundred question
marks"
"Zhan Tianyou"
"Smartness lies in learning, genius lies in
accumulation"
"Letter to Children in Hometown"

Today, the traditional text-centered reading model is gradually being replaced by content that includes complementary images and text, which is widely used in book writing. Textbook editors can influence students' thinking not only through article content but also by conveying values in a more intuitive way through pictures. Therefore, the interaction between graphics and text can also strengthen gender stereotypes. The study revealed that the primary methods of interacting with pictures and text in textbooks are picture replacement, picture deletion, and picture addition.

In reviewing textbooks published by the People's Education Press, the frequency with which portraits of male and female celebrities appear is extremely uneven. According to the statistics, of the 50 texts describing male celebrities found in the sample, 30 used portraits of male celebrities as illustrations. However, of the only five texts describing female celebrities, only one uses a portrait of a female celebrity as an accompanying image. In three of the remaining four articles, objects and animals were used instead of human figures. There is one article without pictures.

In the first volume of second-grade textbook, the text "Liu Hulan" describing the heroine Liu Hulan. Selected sentence from the original text: "Liu Hulan died gloriously. She was only fifteen years old that year." The accompanying picture is not a portrait of the heroine, but a calligraphic inscription by a leader: greatness in life, glory in death.

FIGURE 8. Picture accompanying the text "Liu Hulan".



In the second volume of the third-grade textbook, the illustration in the text "I Can't Break Trust" describing the socialite Soong Ching Ling is not a portrait, but a "flower basket" of objects related to the article. Selected sentence from the original text: "The little daughter Soong Ching Ling was very happy and looked forward to going to this uncle's house." The content of the text is about Soong Ching Ling's appointment with her friends to make flower baskets together. Because she didn't want to break her promise, she didn't go to her uncle's house, which she had always wanted to do. The image of the flower basket became the accompanying image to the text.

FIGURE 9. Picture accompanying the text "I Can't Break Trust".



In the textbook for the first volume of the fourth grade, the illustrations in the text "The Story of Jingwei", describing the mythical character Jingwei, are not human figures, but are replaced by "birds", animal images related to the article. Selected sentence from the original text: "Emperor Yan's daughter is called Nvwa. The girl swam in the East China Sea and drowned. After she died, she became the Jingwei." Although in Chinese myths and legends Jingwei is a little girl who drowned in the sea and was transformed into a divine bird after her death. The image also does not contain the story's preliminary information.

FIGURE 10. Picture accompanying the text "The Story of Jingwei".



Compared to the male portraits that often appear in textbooks, the deletion and replacement of female portraits makes it difficult not to suspect that female power is being deliberately hidden. The inequitable proportion of portraits can easily dilute the few female images with widespread and positive influence that are selected in textbooks and cannot be deeply remembered by children. As a result, children are likely to develop the stereotype that women cannot do great things because heroes and celebrities are male.

Deletions and substitutions of images are also used to conceal men's responsibilities in the private sphere. An interesting phenomenon is that some texts related to private matters present male characters in the text. However, in the accompanying images, the male characters are hidden or replaced by female images related to the content of the text.

For example, the text "Qianren Cake" in the second volume of the second year tells mainly the story of a father telling his children the process of making a Qianren cake. Selected sentence from the original text: "One day, the father said to the child: "Let's eat Thousand People Cake today."" This means that the main mode of the text is the father's education. However, what is shown in the accompanying picture is the production process of Qianren Cake. The protagonists of the text did not appear: the father and the child. It is worth noting that in the final sales link of the flowchart, a mother and her child appear to buy Qianren Cake. Despite the discourse of men dealing with childcare matters, the editors still used images to re-focus childcare matters on women.

FIGURE 11. Picture accompanying the text "Qianren Cake" (1)



FIGURE 12. Picture accompanying the text "Qianren Cake" (2) .



The text "Osmanthus Rain" in the first volume of the fifth grade mentions father, mother and children at the same time. Selected sentence from the original text: "My father used to point at me and tell me that this is a plum blossom and that is a magnolia. "I always annoy my mother by asking her why she doesn't shake the sweet-smelling osmanthus." It can be seen from this that the activities mentioned in the text about accompanying children are carried out by both men and women. In the accompanying picture, however, the image of the man is completely obscured and only the mother is shown alone with her child.

FIGURE 13. Picture accompanying the text "Osmanthus Rain".



The erasure of traces of the masculine image in activities of private sphere will create the misconception that neither housework nor childcare is the responsibility of men. This will have an impact on students' sense of responsibility, especially boys. This makes it possible for them to actively avoid learning about matters of private sphere at the stage of learning life skills, and to

be unable to respect and appreciate female relatives who do private sphere matters, because they will think that women should do these tasks.

When analysing the teaching materials, I found that some text content did not mention the gender of the protagonist, but the accompanying pictures gave a single gender image. The added images were linked to stereotypes about gender and temperament. There are 5 typical texts with preset gender temperaments, all of which appear in the second volume of the first grade.

The text "Rainbow" tells the story of the protagonist "I" who imagines himself or herself on a rainbow bridge helping his or her family with various private things. Selected sentence from the original text: "Dad, where is your watering can? If I carry it, go to the bridge and sprinkle the water down, you won't have to carry water to water the fields". The text creates a kind child. The image of a protagonist who is understanding and committed in the private sphere. The gender of the protagonist is not mentioned in the text. However, the image of a girl appears in the accompanying picture. We have reason to suspect that textbook writers assume that women are more empathetic and helpful than men.

FIGURE 14. Picture accompanying the text "Rainbow".



In the text of "Big or Small", the protagonist "I" learns different skills, such as dressing himself or herself, and develops his or her own ability to be independent. Selected sentence from the original text: "When I get dressed and tie my shoes, I feel I am big." The gender of the protagonist is not mentioned in the text, but the accompanying illustration shows a boy. We have reason to believe that the editor

feels that boys are more in keeping with the image of independent characters than girls.

FIGURE 15. Picture accompanying the text "Big or Small ".



96

In "How I Want to See It!", the protagonist of the text is eager to travel far away alone, expressing a strong desire to explore the unknown world. Selected sentence from the original text: "In distant Beijing, there is a majestic Tiananmen Square. I said to my mother I really want to see it." There is no mention of gender in the article and the accompanying picture shows the protagonist as male. It is worth mentioning that there are two images in this text. The protagonists of both pictures are boys. This means that the editor assumed that boys, not girls, were the adventurous characters.

FIGURE 16. Picture accompanying the text "How I Want to See It! " (1).



FIGURE 17. Picture accompanying the text "How I Want to See It! " (2).



3.3 Discursive practices: analysis of students' questionnaires

I counted and analysed the questionnaire results of 20 primary school children. I express the impact that discourse can bring based on the concept of intertextuality in linguistics. Specifically, it is the impact that teachers' words and textbook content have on students. The results of the students' questionnaire are specifically presented in Table 11 and Table 12.

TABLE 11. Students' questionnaire results (1)

Thematic discourses	Agree		Disagree	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Boys shouldn't cry.	4	0	6	10
It's normal to fight and swear.	6	0	4	10
Boys need to be masculine.	7	6	3	4
Girls should be sensible and quiet.	3	1	7	9
Boys should take care of girls.	1	4	9	6
Boys are better at math.	8	3	2	7
Boys are better at sports.	9	5	1	5
Girls are better at music and art.	3	6	7	4
Boys are smarter than girls.	7	1	3	9
Girls can be firefighters and police officers.	4	10	6	0
Boys can be nurses.	4	10	6	0
Boys are suitable for adventurous outdoor activities.	10	0	10	0

Girls are suitable for stable indoor activities.	10	8	0	2
Do you feel ashamed and angry when someone says that a certain part of you looks like a girl? (for boys)	4	×	6	×
Do you feel ashamed and angry when someone says that a certain part of you looks like a boy? (for girls)	×	×	0	10
There is a boy in the class who likes to wear skirts and the color pink. Will you laugh at him?	1	2	9	8
Do you think transgender students need treatment?	10	10	0	0

The data above indicates that the students in this study displayed expected gender stereotypes in areas such as gender temperament, learning ability, responsibility distribution, and transgender. The most notable examples are in the perception of negative behaviours, types of activities, career choices and transgender.

All the girls in the study were sensitive and resistant to negative behaviour due to strict behavioural requirements. In contrast, boys tend to be more tolerant of negative behaviours.

Although most students disagree with the labelling of specific gender temperament adjectives, in the survey on activity types, most students agreed that boys are suitable for adventurous activities, while girls are suitable for stable activities. This suggests that gender temperament stereotypes still have a significant impact on students, albeit in a more indirect form. This implies that even though students may consciously resist the act of 'labelling', they are still being disciplined in a more subtle manner.

At the same time, the researchers found that boys seemed to display more gender stereotypes than girls. When it came to career choices, all the girls who took part in the study showed a tolerant and open attitude towards career choices, while more than half of the boys still had a negative attitude towards careers that did not conform to traditional gender roles. In addition, girls exhibit a more tolerant attitude towards expressing their emotions compared to boys. Boys are still impacted by the teaching of emotional resilience.

Students expressed agreement with the binary gender model, as reflected in their attitudes towards the transgender community. While most students showed respect towards their classmates from sexual minority groups, they believed that transgender people should be treated equally. This suggests that students may not fully embrace non-mainstream gender models.

Other themes do not present very dramatic contrasts, but are nonetheless worthy of note. Specifically, although boys are no longer expected to play the role of protector, the requirement for masculinity is still endorsed by the majority of participating students. In terms of subject performance, men as a whole show more confidence than girls in all fields. Interestingly, none of the girls in the study objected to being said to resemble boys, but nearly half of the boys resented being called like a girl. I think this is a problem that all educators need to be vigilant about. "Misogyny" may still be present in the minds of young boys.

TABLE 12. Students' questionnaire results (2)

Thematic discourses	Results
Who should parent?	7 boys thought it was their mother, 3 boys thought it was their father; 9 girls thought it was their mother, and 1 girl thought it was another female elder.
Who should learn to do housework?	3 boys think that girls should learn to do housework, 1 boy thinks that boys should learn to do housework, 6 boys think that both boys and girls should learn to do housework;

When you think of heroes, do you think of men or women?	1 girl thinks that boys should learn, and 9 girls think that both should learn.
	3 boys thought of men, 7 boys thought of both genders; 1 girl thought of men, and 9 girls thought of both genders.

The views of the students regarding the division of responsibilities between the public and private spheres were significantly impacted. Almost all students believed that childcare should be the responsibility of women, while only three students believed that men should bear this responsibility.

Although most students believed that both men and women should learn to work in the private sphere, such as doing housework, women still receive more votes than men in this area.

It is noteworthy that, in terms of heroic roles, most students can recall images of both male and female heroes, although the images of female celebrities in the People's Education Press textbooks are presented in various forms. However, four students still only recalled male hero images, and none of the students recalled female hero images exclusively.

The data above shows that the traditional notion of gender roles, where women are responsible for the private sphere and men for the public sphere, no longer has a significant impact on students. The boundaries between public and private spheres are no longer strictly divided by gender, but this stereotype still has some influence.

3.4 Social practices: an exploration of gender image in teachers' discourse

Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis theory advocates placing discourse in its social and cultural context for macro-level examination. Discourse can be included in various social practices, including economic, political, cultural,

and ideological directions. The issue of gender is influenced by various social factors, including government policies, market environment, social and cultural concepts, and other related aspects. In this study, the interviewed teachers also discussed gender temperament changes and gender equality issues. This section aims to analyse the changes in the social gender picture presented in teachers' discourse and briefly examine the reasons behind them.

During the interviews on the topics of gender temperament changes and gender equality, the researcher found that all the teachers interviewed gave consistent views. The analysis of their discourse allowed the researchers to briefly describe the changing process of the social gender landscape.

The differences between gender temperaments are gradually narrowing. Traditional masculine and feminine traits are becoming less acceptable to younger generations. Women are encouraged to be more courageous, confident and outgoing, while men's emotional and fragile temperaments are also more tolerated. Additionally, having both gender characteristics has become a mainstream aesthetic trend.

“I believe that the gender gap is narrowing. Nowadays, girls are becoming more courageous and taking initiative. Many girls in today's society are advocating for feminism, which has become a popular movement.”

(我认为差距正在缩小。现在的女孩更加勇敢、更加主动。就像当今社会很多女孩都在追求女权主义一样，这个词现在很流行。)

“I believe that both boys and girls are capable of achieving anything without limitations.”

(现在我觉得男孩和女孩可以做任何事情，没有任何限制。)

Teachers generally believe that communication technology and media have narrowed gender differences in temperament. This is because these tools allow individuals to easily connect with each other, while promoting a more neutral aesthetic direction.

“When we are young, boys and girls are often segregated. They have limited opportunities to play together and share common hobbies. However, with the advent of mobile phones, it has become easier for them to connect and interact. Boys can now invite girls to join them in their activities.”

(当我们年轻的时候，男孩和女孩是非常不同的。比如，男孩和女孩在一起玩耍的机会不多，也没有共同的爱好。因为手机将它们连接起来。当男孩子去玩的时候，他们会邀请女孩子一起玩。)

“ Many characters in modern media are increasingly androgynous. Children's perceptions of gender characteristics and aesthetics have become more open-minded compared to previous generations. As a result, they are more accepting of individuals with different characteristics.”

(当今媒体上的许多人物都更加雌雄同体。孩子们的审美和对于性别特征的定义肯定比我们小时候开放得多。他们将更加能包容具有不同特征的个人。)

The educational environment for women has improved. As women increasingly participate in social activities, their social status has undergone a qualitative leap. The most significant and critical aspect of this is that more and more women have gained the right to receive education. In interviews with some teachers, they compared the situation of women 20 years ago to the present and found significant differences. This is primarily evident in the increased liberation of girls from household chores and the premature burden of supporting male family members. This allows them to focus on developing skills and improving themselves. Additionally, women are encouraged to pursue higher education and academic achievements, as well as to prioritize their own life values rather than solely focusing on marriage and childbirth. Additionally, the 1970s 'one-child' policy resulted in girls receiving more attention from their families.

“In the past, girls from poorer families often missed out on education. If the family had limited resources, they would priorities sending their younger brother to school. Girls would often have to work at a young age to support their family or get married early. However, today, girls are highly valued in families. Those who are able to do so, support their children's education and invest in various extracurricular activities for their daughters.”

(在我们年轻的时候，一些家庭比较贫困的女孩没有机会上学。如果家里有钱，只会供弟弟上学。女孩子可能会早点出去打工赚钱养家，还得给弟弟钱，或者早点结婚。如今，女孩在家庭中非常珍贵。家里有能力的都支持孩子读书，还花很多钱送女孩去各种兴趣班。)

“When we were young, girls didn't receive as much attention from our parents as there were many siblings in the family. Boys' education was given more priority. Girls could usually attend high school and find jobs to support themselves. Nowadays, many families have only one child, and if it's a girl, she is considered a treasure. Parents attach great importance to their daughter's education and are willing to fully support her through college, graduate school, or even a Ph.D. Women's status has significantly improved, and now everyone has the opportunity to pursue higher life goals and more possibilities. This is due to the changing times.”

(当我们小的时候，女孩并没有受到父母太多的关注，因为家里有很多兄弟姐妹。男孩的教育将受到更多关注。女孩通常可以上到高中并找到工作来养活自己。现在很多家庭都只有一个孩子，女孩就是宝贝。家长非常重视教育。如果他们想支持自己读大学、读研究生，甚至读博士，他们都会全力支持。因为时代变了，女性的地位显著提高，每个人都可以追求更高的人生目标和更多的可能性。)

The interviewed teachers concurred that gender equality exists in basic education. They attributed this to China's national policy of providing nine-year compulsory education to every school-age child, employing the same examination system, and teaching the same content and activities to all students.

“The country now requires nine years of compulsory education. Boys and girls study together in the same classroom, ensuring fairness.”

(因为现在国家要求九年义务教育。男生和女生在同一个教室学习，所以很公平。)

“Our school promotes gender equality, ensuring that all activities are inclusive and accessible to everyone. Regardless of gender, every student is encouraged to participate in all activities. Additionally, our education system is designed to be fair and unbiased, with boys and girls sitting together in class.”

(我们学校所有类型的活动都是性别公平的。无关性别，每一个学生都被鼓励参加所有的活动。学生接受的教育也是公平的。课堂上男孩和女孩坐在一起。)

Respondents widely recognize gender equality in the basic education industry workplace. The promotion path of elementary educators rarely experiences the glass ceiling phenomenon. Women dominate management in

the primary education industry. However, men may have an advantage over women in job hunting due to their scarcity.

“Gender is not a significant factor. Everyone relies on their own strengths. Women have ample opportunities to advance to higher positions in the basic education industry, as long as they are willing to work hard. It is worth noting that seventy percent of the management positions in our primary schools are held by women.”

（我不认为性别有太大影响。每个人都依靠自己的力量。女性在基础教育行业也有很大的机会晋升到更高的职位，只要你愿意付出。我们小学的管理层中有百分之七十是女性。）

Analysis of teachers' discourse shows that acceptance of gender temperament is gradually increasing. We have moved away from strict binary gender requirements and now respect the diversity of individual temperaments. Gender is no longer seen as the sole blueprint for personal development. The development of science and technology has played a significant role in promoting the diversification of temperaments.

In addition, women's basic education has been guaranteed. They have gradually emerged from being limited to private affairs and giving up self-education, and now have the opportunity to receive higher education and pursue academic achievements in the public field. Despite the existence of hidden gender discrimination and restrictions against women, such as the 'glass ceiling' phenomenon in the workplace, lower probability of rural women receiving higher education, and low expectations for women, women are fighting for their rights and have achieved remarkable results.

The interviewed teachers expressed positive views about the basic education workplace. It is important to note that these evaluations are subjective. However, it indicated that gender is not a significant barrier to advancement. Moreover, gender equity in primary school students' studies, activities, and examinations on campus is also guaranteed by the current system.

4 DISCUSSION

This study investigates the gender stereotypes presented in the discourse of primary school teachers and the graphic content of People's Education Press Chinese textbooks, as well as their impact on students. The aim is to identify the manifestations of gender stereotypes and how they are perceived by students.

4.1 Results in this study

The survey results indicate that gender stereotypes are present in the discourse of the interviewed teachers. This is evident in their use of different adjectives to describe ideal masculinity and femininity, as well as their choice of nouns to predict career that each gender is suitable for and the types of subjects that each gender is good at. Furthermore, the discourse of the interviewed teachers includes stereotypes that can be categorized into the following themes: the belief that men are strong and women are weak, varying approaches to handling negative behaviours based on gender, different attributions of achievement based on gender, and negative attitudes towards non-binary gender groups.

Gender stereotypes are present in Chinese textbooks for grades 1-6 of the People's Education Press. The survey reveals an uneven distribution of same behaviour and same types of roles between male and female characters. Additionally, the editor reinforces gender stereotypes through the interaction between pictures and text content. Specifically, they used picture replacement to weaken the influence of female characters in the public sphere, used picture deletion to hide men's affairs in the private sphere, and used pictures to add the preset gender of the protagonist.

During the investigation, it was observed that teachers' discourse and textbook content have an impact on students. Specific manifestations include students' gender temperament, subjects they are good at, activities they participate in, allocation of responsibilities, attitudes towards negative behaviours, and attitudes towards non-binary gender groups. These aspects are similar to gender stereotypes presented in teacher discourse and textbook content.

These findings suggest that gender stereotypes are potentially present in primary education in a variety of ways and are affecting Chinese children.

Result 1: Private spheres and public spheres

The division of labour between people in different spheres differs according to gender. One of the most common gender stereotypes is that men's main responsibilities are in the public sphere and women's main responsibilities are in the private sphere, represented by the family. This means that a man's social influence is very important and emphasized by successful examples, while a woman's social influence is considered dispensable because it is not her main area of responsibility. Therefore, in order to consolidate their social influence, higher expectations are placed on men's career plans. Creative, adventurous and well-paid careers are seen as the ideal career for men. In contrast, there is a lack of expectations for women's careers in the public sphere. Supportive, stable jobs also mean that lower paid jobs are seen as more suitable for women.

In terms of family activities, women are seen as having the main responsibility, such as childcare and housework. The image of the loving and devoted mother and the image of the gentle and selfless wife are emphasized. Under the influence of this gender stereotype, men also often try to be absent or even completely invisible in family activities.

Result 2: Appearance and capabilities

Gender stereotypes are also reflected in behavioural norms. The study found that women's outward appearance is the focus of attention and is repeatedly disciplined. Women are expected to maintain an elegant appearance, whether

sitting or standing. This also means that rude behaviour, such as swearing and physical confrontation, should be strictly forbidden. This is not in the interest of visual aesthetics. The ideal woman is also considered to be gentle, well-educated, etc.

The requirements for men's appearance are much more tolerant. Because men are not seen as objects of aesthetic value. Therefore, men's negative behaviour is not taken seriously. In the competition for social influence, male competence is a key factor in achieving status. Behaviour that demonstrates competence is seen as masculine. Therefore, behaviours that show vulnerability, such as crying, are considered shameful among men. Conversely, negative behaviour may be encouraged if it helps to gain a competitive advantage.

Result 3: Nurture and nature

There is also a gender bias in estimates of individual intelligence. Research has shown that men are considered to be more intellectually gifted than women. This is reflected in the fact that men are thought to be better at logical thinking and are also physically stronger than women. Women are considered good at projects that require memory because women are more industrious than men, and memory only needs to be consolidated repeatedly and has nothing to do with innate intelligence. Women's diligence is often attributed to their obedience. For example: more cooperative with the teacher's classroom activities and assigned tasks. When women achieve results in traditionally male-dominated fields, this gender stereotype is not easily changed. At such moments, a woman's performance is attributed to her prematurity compared to men of the same age, or to the laziness of the other male participants.

Result 4 : Rejection behaviour

Finally, the study found significant bias against non-binary gender groups. This means that sexual minorities who are different from themselves are seen as pathological, antisocial and abnormal. Tolerant attitudes towards the transgender community remain superficial and most people are still unable to have regular social interactions with them. The transgender community is seen as something to be medically corrected rather than as a self-consistent gender model. This

exclusionary behaviour can also be extended to explore negative attitudes towards other queer people, but this is beyond the scope of this study.

4.2 A trend towards gender equality and possible causes

In my research, I also discovered a striking trend. The achievement of gender equality in education and career, as mentioned in teachers' discourse, is a gradual process. The improvement of women's status and respect for the diversity of personal temperaments are also hard-won. National policies, economic development, and cultural communication are all indispensable factors that contribute to this picture.

The 'Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China' was passed in 1986, mandating the implementation of nine years of compulsory education across the country. This system is uniformly implemented by the state, ensuring that all school-age children and teenagers have the right to receive compulsory education. It is a public welfare initiative that the state must protect. The implementation of nine-year compulsory education means that school-age children and teenagers will receive education without any tuition or miscellaneous fees. The state has established a funding guarantee mechanism for compulsory education to ensure its implementation.

According to a report by China Women's Daily, in 2023, the consolidation rate for nine-year compulsory education will be 95.7%, which is a 0.2 percentage point increase from the previous year. Ma Jingbin, the first-level inspector and deputy director of the Basic Education Department at the Ministry of Education, stated that the current and crucial tasks are to accelerate the high-quality and balanced development of compulsory education, provide fairer and higher-quality compulsory education, and better meet the public's expectations of education.

Nine-year compulsory education provides all school-age children in China with the right to receive basic education and imposes legal restrictions on their guardians. This is a crucial step towards promoting gender equality in education,

particularly in protecting women's right to education. National policy control has established a strong foundation for promoting gender equality in China.

Beyond the will of the state, the rapid development of the “her economy” with female power as the main body is also the reason for the gradual advancement of gender equality. From 1978 to the end of 1992, the number of female workers in China increased from 3.128 million to 5.6 million, and their share of the total workforce rose from 32.6% to 38%. A 2023 study by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), launched by the Babson School of Business and London Business School in the United States, shows that the entrepreneurial activity index of Chinese men is 12% and that of women is 11.16%, which is very close to men. The overall female entrepreneurial activity index ranks 6th in the world. China is undoubtedly a country where female entrepreneurship is very active. In 1993, the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce conducted the first survey of Chinese private entrepreneurs. In this sample survey, the proportion of women was 9.9%. Since then, the proportion of female private business owners has slowly increased over the past decade. In 2008, the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce conducted the 8th Sample Survey of Private Enterprises and Business Owners in China (the survey was based on a sampling rate of 70,000, and a total of 4,098 private enterprise owners were surveyed). It showed that the proportion of female private enterprise owners was 15.8%. A survey shows that by the end of 2008 there were more than 29 million female entrepreneurs in the country, accounting for about 20% of the total number of entrepreneurs in the country; the proportion of self-employed women reached more than 21%, which is close to the level of men. Among them, self-employed women and private entrepreneurs account for 41% of the total number of women entrepreneurs (Xin,2010).

The term "her economy" first appeared in the 171 annual new words published by the Ministry of Education in 2007. It is derived from the "women's economy" proposed by the famous economist Shi Qingqi at the Ninth National Congress of Chinese Women. "The concept refers specifically to "with the improvement of women's economic conditions and the rise of their social status, the unique economic cycle and economic phenomenon formed around women's

financial management and consumption". With the improvement of women's economic, social and family status, women have gradually become the main force behind the sustainable growth of market consumption. Women are increasingly appearing in all walks of life and have become the backbone of society, representing "half the sky". As women have gradually become an indispensable part of the creation of social and economic value, the power of their words has gradually become something that cannot be ignored. The gap between women and men in participation in public activities is gradually closing and the idea that one gender is superior to the other is no longer tenable.

With the help of social media, all those who have long been imprisoned by patriarchal concepts of gender power have more free channels to speak out. By sharing their personal experiences of gendering, more stereotypes, differential treatment, gender neglect and other phenomena that have gone unnoticed in the past can surface and become visible public issues.

These issues have been brought to public attention with the help of hot discussions in the online world, thus promoting the continuous improvement and perfection of relevant policies and realizing collective resistance to gender stereotypes and gender inequality. Resistance to "masculine education", the "Me Too" movement focusing on incidents of sexual harassment, resistance to the stigmatization of women, resistance to the restoration of women's moral education, and the "glass ceiling" phenomenon of gender bullying in the workplace have repeatedly appeared on China's popular social media, such as hot search lists on Sina Weibo and Xiaohongshu.

Behind these online speaking behaviours is the younger generation's re-examination of the unequal discourse power relations under patriarchy and their strong desire to rewrite gender norms. The younger generation's online names use the power of public opinion to promote protest activities, bring gender issues into the public eye through large-scale group voice actions, and seek to promote the process of gender equality.

4.3 Further considerations regarding the mitigation of gender stereotypes

A review of the existing literature on this topic and my own research has revealed that gender stereotypes are becoming increasingly prevalent in China's primary education system. It can be surmised that the pre-employment training for teachers and textbook writers does not prioritize the avoidance of gender stereotypes. This results in teachers failing to select instructions and management strategies that can facilitate gender equality in daily teaching. Similarly, textbook writers also fail to consider maintaining a balance in the proportion and distribution of gender roles, and how to avoid presuppositions with personal emotions in their work.

It is of particular importance for teachers to pay attention to the fair distribution of labour in daily class activities. It is advisable to avoid the assignment of more physically demanding tasks to boys and the overlooking of girls who are equally capable of performing the same work. A more optimal approach would be to distribute labour based on strength, rather than gender. Furthermore, it is more appropriate to utilise the term "help" in lieu of "care" as a guide. In responding to students, it is advisable to cultivate awareness of gender equality. It is advisable to encourage students to pursue their own personality development, rather than to observe whether their development trajectory conforms to traditional gender patterns. In evaluating academic performance, it is inappropriate to use gender-related words. To illustrate, consider the following example: There is considerable scope for improvement in the student's mathematical abilities. Rather than: Female students tend to perform slightly less well in mathematics than their male counterparts. It is imperative that campus rules are applied in a fair and impartial manner, and that double standards are avoided. In the event of a student displaying negative behaviour, it is imperative that the response and subsequent treatment received from the teacher is consistent regardless of the gender of the student in question. Finally, students with non-significant binary gender temperaments should receive more inclusive attention from teachers. This necessitates the establishment of a more gentle and

intimate psychological connection with them. When students experience distress associated with their gender identity, it is important to provide them with appropriate psychological counselling channels and to offer them comfort and assistance. If students are able to achieve a balance between their gender identity and their inner sense of belonging, it is an effective method of not interfering excessively and respecting their natural development.

For those engaged in the creation of textbooks, it is essential to consider the maintenance of an equal number of gender roles and the balance between male and female roles within the same field and the same activities. It would be beneficial to place greater emphasis on male participation in activities such as childcare and housework, rather than associating a large number of female roles with child roles. It would be beneficial to create more inclusive emotional roles, such as crying boys and brave girls. Furthermore, it is important to consider the balance of discourse power between the two sexes. This can be achieved by presenting a greater number of images of female celebrities and heroines with positive influence. In addition, the incorporation of more articles by female writers into textbooks represents a further means of enhancing the power of female narratives.

It is evident that there is still a need for improvement in the sensitivity to gender stereotypes among Chinese basic education workers. My research and that of others have demonstrated the existence of issues related to gender stereotypes in the field of basic education and present the manner in which they manifest. It is our objective to draw the attention of Chinese basic education workers to the far-reaching harm of gender stereotypes. Furthermore, it is necessary to investigate the potential for integrating gender stereotype recognition skills training into pre-service teacher education programmes. Another area that merits further research is the cultivation of students' gender equality awareness in the context of daily teaching activities. Additionally, the potential for embedding content that promotes gender equality in textbook compilation warrants further investigation.

5 CONCLUSION

Using Fairclough's three-dimensional framework theory as the overall structure, this study aims to investigate the reflection of gender stereotypes in the field of primary education.

I used thematic analysis to examine gender stereotypes in the discourse of 10 teachers from two primary schools in Chongqing; content analysis was used to examine gender stereotypes in Chinese textbooks for grades one to six published by the People's Education Press.

I verified the existence of gender stereotypes in the teachers' discourse. I categorized the gender stereotypes I found into the following themes: men are strong and women are weak; gender stereotypes related to negative behavior; gender stereotypes related to achievement attribution; negative emotions towards transgender people. I have analysed each theme in detail and data and text examples are given.

In the analysis of the textbooks, gender stereotypes also emerged as expected. One of the most prominent gender-stereotypes I found is that men's responsibilities are in the public sphere and women's responsibilities are in the private sphere. I verified that gender stereotypes affect the division of responsibilities by counting and comparing the proportion of parenting activities and positive influential celebrities in male and female roles. At the same time, the way pictures and texts interact in textbooks also shows the existence of gender stereotypes. I found that the textbook writers used three forms: picture substitution, picture deletion and picture addition to try to weaken women's influence in the public sphere and strengthen men's influence; they emphasized women's responsibilities in the private sphere and weakened men's role in

housework and childcare. And the stereotypes of gender temperament are also vividly expressed through the interaction of images and texts.

At the same time, through a questionnaire survey of 20 primary school students and intertextuality between discourses, I verified that teachers' words and gender stereotypes conveyed in textbooks do indeed have an impact on primary school students. I found that in terms of gender temperament, learning ability, division of responsibilities, and attitudes towards transgender people, most of the students surveyed held gender stereotypes that were reflected in teachers' discourse and textbooks.

In addition, I analysed some teachers' views on gender equality at the end and found that teachers generally believe that they feel gender equality in the workplace of primary education. At the same time, teachers also believe that the school has ensured gender equality in primary education in various aspects such as examination systems, curriculum content and classroom activities. In particular, the educational status of women, once a disadvantaged group in a patriarchal society, has improved significantly. Teachers also generally complain that with the development of society, the temperaments of individuals have become more diverse, and gender is no longer the main basis for the cultivation and development of personal temperament. National policy, the economy, media, and technology all play important roles in this change.

5.1 Implications and Recommendations

The results of this study have several important implications for future research on gender stereotypes in primary education in China. First, this study demonstrates the need to incorporate gender stereotype avoidance into the pre-service training of primary school teachers. In addition, it is also necessary to consider how to avoid gender stereotypes when designing teaching materials. In Hong Kong, printed textbooks must follow the principle of gender equality. There is no bias in the content, such as overgeneralization and stereotyping (Education Bureau, 2012). However, there is no such requirement in mainland China. In addition, when faced with content that may contain gender stereotypes in

textbooks, how teachers should interpret and handle the content also needs to be considered. A more immediate method would be to consider how teachers deal with these gendered texts, as it has been argued that a gender-based text is not necessarily a vehicle for discriminate if the teacher is capable of using it in a critical manner (Pakuła et al., 2014). How to achieve gender equality in teacher training or textbook writing is a topic worthy of study.

In addition, this study is based on discovering the existence of gender stereotypes and exploring in what form they exist. How these gender stereotypes are formed in Chinese society may also be a topic worth studying. At the end of the thesis, I presented teachers' views on some changes in individual gender temperament differences, changes in women's educational status, basic education classroom activities and gender equality in the workplace, and briefly discussed some of the causes. I think this part of the content can be further developed and studied in the future. For example, the development process of women's educational status, how to ensure gender equality in basic education classroom activities, how to ensure gender equality in the workplace in basic education, etc.

5.2 Limitations

Although this study adds to the research on gender stereotypes in primary education in China, it still has its limitations. This study was limited to 10 interviewed teachers and 20 students who responded to the questionnaire survey in two primary schools in Chongqing, China. The review and analysis of textbooks was limited to primary school Chinese subjects published by the People's Education Press. Future research could include participants from different backgrounds to gain a broader understanding of the types of presentation and more profound effects of gender stereotypes.

Secondly, the lexical and thematic analysis of the paper writing and teachers' discourse was conducted in English, despite the original data being in Chinese. As a native Chinese researcher, I made every effort to accurately translate and convey the meaning of the interview texts and textbook content.

However, there may still be some inaccuracies that are difficult to discern. I need to deepen my understanding of this topic and related theories, and make further revisions and reflections.

Finally, this study focuses on gender stereotypes and related topics such as gender equality, teacher education, transgender issues, and women's rights development. The research objectives are limited in scope, and this study serves as a starting point for further investigation into gender issues in basic education in China.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Teacher interview questions

Questions with stereotypes in gender temperament

1. What is the ideal temperament for boys from your perspective?
2. What is the ideal temperament for girls from your perspective?
3. Have you ever witnessed boys in your class crying?
4. How would you react if a boy sheds tears?
5. Are obedience, sensibility, and quietness essential qualities for a girl? Why or why not?
6. Are there many active or naughty girls in your class?
7. How would you react if you met a girl like this?
8. Which group, boys or girls, is more likely to have disputes with their peers? For instance, using offensive language towards one another or engaging in physical altercations.
9. Do you tolerate fights between boys more than fights between girls? Why or why not?

Questions with stereotypes in talent

1. Is there a difference in concentration between boys and girls?
2. Are there differences in the subjects at which boys and girls excel?
3. Is there a difference in memory between boys and girls?
4. Is there a difference in logical thinking ability between boys and girls?
5. Is there a difference in physical strength between boys and girls?
6. Is there a difference in physical flexibility between boys and girls?
7. Is there a difference in artistic perception between boys and girls?
8. Are there differences in future career choices between boys and girls?
9. What careers do boys tend to choose in your mind?
10. What careers do girls tend to choose in your mind?

11. How would you respond upon learning that a girl aspires to become a police officer in the future?
12. How do you respond when you hear that a boy aspires to become a nurse in the future?

Questions with transgender

1. Did you understand the concept of the 'transgender' prior to the interview?
2. What is your opinion on the transgender community?
3. Do you have any transgender family members or friends? Do you feel uncomfortable when interacting with them?
4. Do any of your students identify as transgender? How will you interact with them?

Questions regarding the comparison of past and present situations

1. Have the temperament differences between boys and girls changed today compared to when you were in elementary school?
2. Is the educational environment for women better now than when you were a child?
3. Is today's educational environment fair for women?
4. Do you understand the concept of the "glass ceiling"?
5. Is the modern workplace fair for women?