

# Discriminatory Words in Written Outputs of Students in Junior High School

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**Abstract** – The main purpose of the study is to determine the discriminatory words in written output of the students in junior high school. The respondents were composed of 100 grade 10 students of San Juan Integrated National High School during school year 2018-2019. Through descriptive evaluative method, the researcher used questionnaire and rubrics as main instruments in the study. The results were described in terms of frequency, percentage, rank, mean, mode, standard deviation, kurskal-wallis and spearman rho. The study revealed that most of the students are fifteen-year-old, female. However, in terms of parents' educational attainment, most of the fathers are graduates of secondary education and most mothers are graduates of tertiary level. Likewise, most of the fathers are self-employed and most of the mothers are unemployed. In terms of the use of discriminatory words, it was found out that males, despite being lesser in number in the composition of respondents, tend to use blatant sexism compared to the female respondents; Although the students' choice of words is more of blatant, it is not reflected in their written outputs which has very low usage of discriminatory words. The study concluded that: (1) There might be other factors that affect the student choice of words and their use of discriminatory words like cognitive, sociocultural and affective factors; (2) The students who are millennial are aware of discriminatory words and reflects sensitively to gender equality such that their written outputs do not include the use of blatant words.

**Keywords** – Sexism, Gender Equality, Discriminatory Words

## INTRODUCTION

Sexism is a bias or discrimination based on the sex/gender of a person, but it largely affects women. It includes the belief of one gender is inherently superior than another and linked to gender roles and stereotypes (Masequesmay, 2008). There are many forms of sexism, but as long as a person devalue either both sex, it is recognized as sexism. A person sometimes not intend to hurt someone in terms of sex, but sexism is not a matter of intention but the effect that a person will cause to the victim of sexism. According to study, all the effects that sexism cause is negative (Tao, 2007). The manner how gender is related to language has something to do with the role of a person in the society. This statement has been already verified in one hundred eleven countries with different language structure. The study had proved that people who mostly use language in a sexist way creates a bias in favor with man. And person who creates a discourse or speaks sexist language makes its readers and listener think of more male rather than female by means of exemplar in giving a person as example (Stahlberg et al., 2007).

Glick and Fiske (1996) define sexism as a theoretical paradigm that holds two sub-components to sexism in language: "hostile sexism" and "benevolent sexism." Hostile sexism reflects overtly negative evaluations and stereotypes about a gender. Consider the notion that women are less capable and deserving of respect than men. Benevolent sexism represents evaluations of gender that may appear subjectively positive. Although they are harmful to people and gender equality more generally, they are subjective to the one who is judging them. In written outputs, when discrimination through gender occurs, hostile and benevolent sexism is subdivided in three classifications – Blatant, subtle and covert sexism. These written outputs reflect on the characteristic of the child which promotes insensitivity, immorality and fruitlessness. This study will mainly focus on the discriminatory words used by the students in terms of gender. It will also show the extent of student's knowledge in discriminatory words in terms of gender and the use of these discriminatory words in their written outputs.

As a teacher, one must be gender-inclusive in his/her utterance because this might have deprived

the students nor lose their motivation to learn. If a teacher is sensitive enough not to hurt the feelings of the students in terms of gender, then the student will absorb that attitude and pass it to others little by little.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research aimed to discover the relationship of using Discriminatory words to the written outputs of the students at San Juan Integrated National High School. And how do the profile of the students interfere with the following variables.

Specifically, it aims to:

- determine the profile of the students in terms of age, sex, parents' educational attainment and parents' occupation.
- determine the students' choice of words with respect to covert sexism, subtle sexism and blatant sexism.
- determine the extent of the use of discriminatory words in students' written output – poems and essay.
- test the significant difference between the extent of the use of discriminatory words in written poems and essays when the students are grouped according to the profile
- test the significant relationship between the students' choice of words and extent of discriminatory words in their written poems and essays

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

A study was conducted by Sarawgi (2009) which stated that one of the procedures the study had done was to download blogs from popular blog sites for 7 distinctive topics:3 education, travel, spirituality, entertainment, book reviews, history and politics. Within each topic, we find 20 articles written by male authors/students, and additional 20 articles written by female authors/students. We took the effort to match articles written by different gender even at the subtopic level. Note that previous research on web blogs does not purposefully maintain balanced topics between gender, thereby benefiting from topic bias inadvertently. From each electronically written blogs, it shows that 82% of the male are using discriminatory words which degrades other gender, while only 22% of female uses derogatory words.

Due to stereotypes, there are culturally correct and prescribe ways for boys and girls feel, act and think.

This reflects to student's way of studying and socializing with their classmates. A qualitative-quantitative research was conducted in public high schools to test the textbooks used by their instructors. The local English language textbook revealed that there are still linguistic features and symbols which are sexist. It is believed that this is because of the stereotypes inherited from the past. Moreover, it indicates that male are more dominant than female who's been degraded. Pedagogical insinuations ascend from the study. One is the vital role of a teacher in a classroom in preventing discrimination in terms of gender. Another is the crucial evaluation of the textbooks used by the students and the students writing compositions to be gender inclusive (Tarrayo, 2014).

The Case of Sasmuan, Pampanga is one of an example of sexist language. The town of Sasmuan can be found in the southern part of Pampanga province. It has 9,175 hectares' total land area, twelve barangays, three sitios with 23,359 populations. Sasmuan has its Spanish origin from the word itself "Sasmuan" which means "Tabnuan". Somehow, it become Sasmoan when patriotic Pampangos from towns near Sasmuan plan to create an attack to Chinese and Spanish insurgents. When years past, it Sasmoan became "Sesmoan", and centuries after in the arrival of American Colonizers, the name Sesmoan became "Sexmoan". The name of the town became the center of embarrassment for the people living on it because of its sexual connotation. The people kept using that name for years, some use it for fun. In 1991, because of Republic Act 4160, Sexmoan was returned to its original name, Sasmuan. People living in that area before where ashamed and they are a victim of sexism in language. People devalued the resident of Sasmuan by making fun of it.

When a person prefers to use common masculine language instead of gender-inclusive form, they interconnect with others in stereotypes and bias way excluding the girls and women in participating their social roles. Researchers conducted study to famous classical books to determine this issue about sexism in language. They had found out that out of 20 classical books, 7 are sexist. (Title and author of the books were not allowed to mention. Out of 7 books, 5 authors of the books are male. As published classical books, this promotes sexist attitudes and beliefs to the readers. Given that these traits are just self-evident to others, it is not clear whether the users

itself of this kind of language is using sexist language on purpose (Sczesny, 2015).

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The researcher used quantitative method. Random sampling technique is utilized to determine the subject of the study where each member of the population has an equal chance of being included in the samples. The respondents of the study were one hundred (100) students in the Junior High School. Specifically, the Grade 10 students of San Juan Integrated National High School at Kalayaan, Laguna. The result of the study was based on the results of the gathered data from the respondents' profile and written outputs. The researcher also created rubrics which validated by the experts to assess the written outputs of the students.

### **Research Design**

The researcher used descriptive evaluative to accomplish the research. With this, the researcher categorized, evaluated, compared and explained the written outputs and other supporting data in his research. Descriptive evaluative research objective is to evaluate systematically the value of a project, design, research and many more.

Descriptive evaluative is a deliberate method of collecting, evaluating, classifying and sorting data. Commonly, researcher used questionnaire checklist and survey questionnaire in gathering the data. It's main purposed is to evaluate and explained the data gathered (Calderon and Gonzales, 2004).

### **Participants/Respondents**

The respondents of the study were one hundred (100) students in the Junior High School. Specifically, the Grade 10 students of San Juan Integrated National High School at Kalayaan, Laguna. The researcher used the random sampling technique to determine the subject of the study where each member of the population has an equal chance of being included in the samples. In using this method, the researcher needs a complete list of members of the population. In this study, the fishbowl method has used to determined what sections in Grade 10 Junior High School were included as respondents.

### **Instrumentation**

After the researcher's colloquium, he sought out for permission of the Division Office to have his pilot testing at Siniloan Integrated National High School. The school subject to pilot testing is not the respondents of this study. After the questionnaire and rubrics had been validated, the researcher proceeds to the random sampling to verify the sections in San Juan Integrated National High School he conducts his study.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

, the researcher prepared one-week schedule in conducting his study. On the first day, the researcher asked his respondents to answered the questionnaire. The second day was for the researcher to checked and evaluated the questionnaire answered by the respondents. The third day was scheduled for the respondents to composed an essay in the morning and a poem in the afternoon with the theme prepared by the researcher. The fourth and last date was scheduled for the checking and evaluation of the written outputs of the respondents using triangulation. This requires the researcher, subject teacher and master teacher to check and evaluate the written outputs of the students. Afterwards, the data gathered has given to the statistician to analyze and evaluate and brought back to the researcher to expressed on words.

### **Ethical Consideration**

The researcher obtain consent from the school and students that no any private information from the gathered data will be used outside the purposed of the study. Every information gathered in this research will only be used upon the purposed and objectives of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher used frequency, percentage and rank to determine the profile of the students in terms of age, sex, parents' educational attainment and parents' occupation. Mean, standard deviation, frequency and rank were used to determine the students' choice of words with respect to covert sexism, subtle sexism and blatant sexism. To determine the extent of the use of discriminatory words in students' written output such as poems and essays, the researcher utilized mean and standard deviation. Furthermore, the researcher used Kruskal-wallis to test the significant difference between the

extent of the use of discriminatory words in written poems and essays when the students are grouped according to the profile. Lastly, the researcher used Spearman rho to test the significant relationship between the students' choice of words and extent of discriminatory words in their written poems and essays.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the data gathered underwent frequency, percentage, rank, mean, mode, standard deviation, kurskal-wallis and spearman rho and the results were explained comprehensively.

Table 1. Distribution of the students-respondents in terms of age, sex, parent's educational attainment and parent's occupation.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
<b>Age</b>			
14	15	15%	3
15	65	65%	1
16	20	20%	2
Total	100	100%	
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	38	38%	2
Female	62	62%	1
Total	100	100%	
<b>Father's Educational Attainment</b>			
Elementary	9	9%	3
Secondary	46	46%	1
Tertiary	45	45%	2
Total	100	100%	
<b>Mother's Educational Attainment</b>			
Elementary	5	5%	3
Secondary	42	42%	2
Tertiary	52	52%	1
Vocational	1	1%	4
Total	100	100%	
<b>Father's Occupation</b>			
Government Employee	7	7%	4
Contract Worker	32	32%	2
Self-employed	38	38%	1

Unemployed	23	23%	3
Total	100	100%	
<b>Mother's Occupation</b>			
Government Employee	17	17%	2
Contract Worker	12	12%	3
Self-employed	11	11%	4
Unemployed	60	60%	1
Total	100	100%	

The table 1 presents the frequency, percentage distribution and rank of the students' profile in terms of age, sex, parents' educational attainment and parents' occupation. It can be observed that as regard to age, most of the students are fifteen years old with the percent of 65. In addition, female is more dominant than male with 62% in terms of gender. However, in terms of parents' educational attainment, most of the fathers' respondents are graduate of secondary with the percent of 46 while most of the mothers' respondents are graduate of tertiary level. Furthermore, as regard to parent's occupation, most of the father respondents worked as self-employed with the percent of 38 while most of the mothers' respondents were unemployed with the percent of 60.

Table 2. Extent of the students' choice of words

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Students' Choice of Words	1.8447	.16256	Very High

Legend: 1-1.83 Very High; 1.84-1.91 High; 1.2-3.6 Average; 3.61-5.28 Low; 5.29-6 Very Low

The table 2 shows the extent of student choice of words with the mean of 1.8447 and standard deviation of .16256 which is verbally interpreted as very high. In addition to the students' choice of words, most students prefer to use blatant sexism. The second choice of the students is the subtle sexism. The third choice of the students is the covert sexism. The rest is the combination of blatant and subtle sexism, combination of blatant and covert sexism and combination of blatant, subtle and covert sexism. The researcher would like to add that most of the blatant user of discriminatory words are male. While in terms of subtle sexism, female is more dominant user than male. On the other hand, male is more dominant user of covert sexism rather than female. All in all, as the researcher dig deeply through



the data, male is more dominant user of discriminatory words than female.

Becker and Swim (2011) stated that male predominantly label other gender blatantly because of less sensitivity to the forms of sexism that are not explicit. They commit sexism as modern expression in written and oral means.

Table 3. Extent of the use of discriminatory words in students' written outputs

Variable	Mode	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Poem	13.00	2.17356	Very Low
Essay	13.00	2.38463	Very Low

Legend: 1-3.2 Very High; 3.3-6.4 High; 6.5-9.6 Average; 9.7-12.8 Low; 12.9-16 Very Low

Table 3 presents the extent of the use of discriminatory words in students' written outputs with respect to poem and essay. The poem has a mode of 13 and a standard deviation of 2.17 which verbally interpreted as very low extent. On the other hand, essay has a mode of 13 and a standard deviation of 2.38 which also verbally interpreted as very low extend.

Stated that millennial male and female are more aware of sexism of systemic and institutional inequalities between the genders in sociocultural, political, and economic contexts. Therefore, this awareness reflect on the written outputs of the students.

Table 4. Difference between the extent of the use of discriminatory words in written poems and essays when the students are grouped according to the profile.

Profile	Computed Value	df	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	3.919	2	.141	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Sex	12.568	1	.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Father's Educational Attainment	5.919	2	.052	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Mother's Educational Attainment	7.666	3	.053	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Father's Occupation	0.144	2	.930	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Mother's Occupation	1.217	2	.544	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Table 4 shows the result of the difference between the extent of discriminatory words in written outputs of the students with respect to poems and essays when grouped according to the profile.

In terms of age, the computed value is 3.919 and the p-value is 0.141 which is greater than 0.05, then there is ample evidence to accept the hypothesis. Therefore, extent of the use of discriminatory words in written outputs and the respondents' age do not have a significant. It insinuates the age of the respondents does not affect their extent of use of discriminatory words in their written outputs.

In terms of sex, the computed value is 12.568 and the p value is 0 which is less than 0.05, then there is ample evidence to reject the hypothesis. Therefore, extent of the use of discriminatory words in written outputs and the sex of the respondents do have a significant.

In terms of father's educational attainment, the computed value is 5.919 and the p-value is 0.52 which is greater than 0.05, then there is ample evidence to accept the hypothesis. Therefore, extent of the use of discriminatory words in written outputs and father's educational attainment do not have a significant. It insinuates that the father's educational attainment does not affect their extent of use of discriminatory words in their written outputs.

In terms of mother's educational attainment, the computed value is 7.666 and the p-value is 0.53 which is greater than 0.05, then there is ample evidence to accept the hypothesis. Therefore, extent of the use of discriminatory words in written outputs and mother's educational attainment do not have a significant. It indicates that the mother's educational attainment does not affect their extent of use of discriminatory words in their written outputs.

In terms of father's occupation, the computed value is 0.144 and the p value is 0.930 which is greater than 0.05, then there is ample evidence to accept the hypothesis. Therefore, extent of the use of discriminatory words in written outputs and the father's occupation of the respondents do not have a significant. It denotes that the father's occupation of the respondents does not affects their extent of use of discriminatory words in their written outputs.

In terms of mother's occupation, the computed value is 1.217 and the p value is 0.544 which is greater than 0.05, then there is ample evidence to accept the hypothesis. Therefore, extent of the use of discriminatory words in written outputs and the mother's occupation of the respondents do not have

a significant. It insinuates that the mother's occupation of the respondents does not affect their extent of use of discriminatory words in their written outputs.

This implies that the sex of the respondents affects their extent of use of discriminatory words in their written outputs. However, even if female is dominant in the study, percentage distribution of male who uses blatant sexism as choice of words is much higher than the percentage distribution of female. This is parallel to Leimu & Koricheva (2008) study which states that a recent survey revealed that, of the authors publishing in five leading journals, 6% of gender bias in language was from five female authors while 94% bias are from male authors. This supports the study of Czarniawska (2009) which states that discrimination means that men treated women badly and that can be seen in the words they utter upon women.

Table 5. Relationship between the students' choice of words and extent of discriminatory words in their written poems and essays

Variable	Computed Value	df	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Poem	-0.191	9	.057	Accepted Ho	Not Significant
Essay	-0.012	9	.905	Accepted Ho	Not Significant

Table 5 shows the result of the difference between the students' choice of words and extent of discriminatory words in their poems and essays.

In terms of poem, the computed value is -0.191 and the p-value is 0.057 which is greater than 0.05, then there is ample evidence to accept the hypothesis. Therefore, the relationship between the students' choice of words and extent of discriminatory words in their written output with respect to poem do not have a significant. It insinuates the written poem of the respondents does not affect their choice of words.

In terms of essay, the computed value is -0.012 and the p-value is 0.905 which is greater than 0.05, then there is ample evidence to accept the hypothesis. Therefore, the relationship between the students' choice of words and extent of discriminatory words in their written output with respect to essay do not have a significant. It implies that the written essay of the respondents does not affect their choice of words.

This implies that there is no significant relationship between student choice of words and extent of discriminatory words used in written poems and essay. According to Thanh (2010), discrimination in language writing might also be related to language writers' struggle against invisible racism and sexism which came from different factors like cognitive, sociocultural and affective dimensions. This is supported by Bernardo (2010) which states that the discrimination on writing is from how the writer inherit his language and how he experienced this language as a form of discrimination.

### CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the findings suggest, the researcher concluded the following:

There might be other factors that affect the student choice of words and their use of discriminatory words like cognitive, sociocultural and affective factors. The students who are millennial are aware of discriminatory words and reflects sensitively to gender equality such that their written outputs do not include the use of blatant words.

From the findings, the researcher formulates the following recommendations.

The integration of discussion of discriminatory words in terms of gender in the classrooms. Further studies on the other factors like cognitive, sociocultural and affective dimensions that might affect the students' choice of words and their written outputs. Also, future researchers may also conduct a comparative study focused on the differences in the level of awareness of sexism and use of discriminatory words.

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