A Comparative Study of Gender Inequality Represented in English and Bangla Short Stories

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Abstract

The paper aims to examine the issue of gender inequality in Bangla and English short stories. Discrimination based on sex or gender that frequently favours or prioritises one sex or gender over another is known as gender inequality (Hudson, 1996). In our communication system, even without realising one gender treated another gender unequally. In everyday context, the language is significantly biased towards men in Bengali society: A man is called *strain* (ত্রৈণ) (henpecked) if he accepts his wife's opinion, but a woman is called a *protivakti nari* (a devoted woman) if she obeys her husband, even if he wrongs or tortures her. A woman is known as a *besya* (prostitute), *bidhoba* (widow), and *rokhita* (concubine), whereas men are free of any such terms. The study tries to examine how gender discrimination terms are used in short stories.

For this study qualitative methods were used to collect the necessary data. Randomly three famous short stories were selected from each of the languages. After that the language of the stories were analysed in various linguistics and non-linguistics Levels. The findings of this study indicate that, overall, gender inequality favours males in both languages. The implications of the study have far-reaching effects in terms of the goals of achieving gender equality in society.

Keywords: Bangla, English, gender, equality, bias, sexism.

1. Introduction

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Language is a means of communication. In our communication system, even without realising gender is not something we are born with and not something we have, but something we do (West & Zimmerman, 1987), something we perform (Butler, 1990). Sex is a biological categorisation based primarily on reproductive potential, whereas gender is the social elaboration of biological sex (Eckert & Ginet, 2003). People think of gender as the result of nurture- as social and hence fluid, while sex is given by biology. In our social phenomenon, men and women are not treated equally. The treatment may arise from distinctions regarding biology, psychology, or cultural norms prevalent in society. Language is a vehicle by which we transport our thoughts, ideas and expression. However, these ideas also have been influenced by the male gender in our society.

According to Dale Spender (1980), language belongs to men, and men own it. He refers that English is a man's language. We use many words, phrases or lexicons to express our ideas, but these are sometimes biased to a particular gender, mostly in favour of men and against women. This discrimination may be termed **sexism** in language.

Bangla is an Indo-Aryan language that originated in South Asia's Bengal region. It is the second most commonly spoken of India's 22 scheduled languages. It is also Bangladesh's official, national, and most widely spoken language. West Bengal, Tripura, and the Barak (Indian states) Valley region of Assam all have it as their official language. At the same time, English is an Indo-European language in the West Germanic language group. In India, English is used as a lingua franca all over the country. It has the status of the country's second official language and is the official language of many states in the country. Bangladesh does not have an official second language. However, apart from Bangla, English is the only language widely used in the country.

Structurally, Bangla is a gender-friendly language. Unlike English, in Bangla, verbs or pronouns do not change according to gender. In Bangla, single words are used as pronouns, referring to all genders without bias. Hence, the word / Sē / (shey) is used without using specific gendered subject pronouns of' he' or' she'. Despite the perceived gender-neutral nature of the

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language, it is not free from bias. The language has many gender bias nouns and stereotypes, as does English. The topic has come under the spotlight recently. Gender-biased English usage is becoming more and more undesirable. In this way, English presents more difficulties than many other languages. That is primarily due to the lack of grammatical gender in most English nouns. Men's and women's forms of nouns that refer to people are typically not distinguished. English would not be as troublesome if such words were not so male. Workers have long been referred to as "workmen" on construction sites.

The study selects six (6) popular short stories; three from Bangla and three from English. The paper has a threefold objective: Analyse the use of sexist lexemes at different linguistics levels in the texts, (2) based on this analysis, decide whether "x" language has more language sensitivity than language "y" and (3) any sexist language differences exist between the two languages?

2. Methods and Materials

The paper is descriptive, based on secondary sources and focuses on analysing gender inequity or sexism at various linguistic levels in six short stories, each three from Bangla and English. At the morphological level, there is inflexion, which concentrates on how a feminine word in a pair is formed by adding an affix to the masculine word. Generic terms are shown how male terms are used neutrally and make women invisible. Under the alignment of male and female, it is shown how the male term comes before the female term.

Next, at the phrasal level, different types of metaphors and similes are analysed from the text and how they are biased toward women. At the semantics level, the stories are analysed on how women are invisible using different lexicons or phrases. Finally, stereotypical language, idioms and proverbs are also analysed, which makes a difference in men's and women's a social position, hierarchy and dignity and where the language unequally treats women. A comparative analysis focuses on the frequency of using sexism in both languages using a stereotype, alignment, generic form, metaphor and sexist term.

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The selected short stories are popular in the two languages:

Bangla Short Stories: - S1: *Denapaona,* (The Matrimonial Deal or Debit and Credit) written by Rabindranath Tagore (2020). **S2:** *Haraner Natjamai*, (Grandson-in-law of Haran) written by Manik Bandyopadhyay (2021) and **S3:** *Sorir,* (The body) written by Mahasweta Devi (1944).

English Short Stories: - **S1:** *Boys and Girls* written by Alice Munro (1998). **S2:** The Snows of Kilimanjaro written by Ernest Hemingway (1987) and **S3:** The Wooing of Ariadne written by Harry Mark Petrakis (2003).

3. Literature Review

Gender inequality is the social occurrence in which men and women are treated unequally. This unequal treatment can be seen in all types of expressions, like acts, words, images, gestures etc. This is based on the idea that some persons, especially women, are inferior because of their sex. This bias in favour of males has most frequently been referred to as sexism in language, but other terms have also been used. Meaning of sexism is prejudice or discrimination based on sex. The term 'androcentric' (male-centred) was used by Ann Bodine (1975) in her effort to expose the male bias rules of the prescriptive grammarians, 'masculist' labelled to the male bias in language and culture by Joan Roberts (1976), Cora Kaplan (1976) used the term 'patriarchal'.

Linguists have different opinions about linguistic sexism. A few accept that sexist language characterises a sexist society, and others accept that sexist dialect impacts society to be more sexist (Weatherall, 2002). As mentioned in the theory of linguistic determinism, the choice of language decides the way the world is seen by the language user (Mills, 1995). Spender (1980) contends that sexist language empowers sexist worldviews. She also contends that those with control, in other words, men, have the capacity to make language and thus reality (Spender, 1980). Critics of linguist determinism contend that in the event that this would be the case, speakers of languages with exceptionally few words for colours would not be able to see diverse colours (Holmes, 2008). Nevertheless, it is crucial to point out that two shapes of the hypothesis

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exist: the solid one that contends that language decides how we decipher the world and the powerless one that contends that language is a feature by which we develop the world (Pauwels, 1998). According to Holmes (2008), most sociolinguists accept that language somehow influences our worldview and, subsequently, the way we see sexual orientation or gender.

When words are used to derogate and defile women, it is called linguistic sexism. It is found in many different languages and exists in many forms. Semantic derogation is when lexical items have negative connotations and meanings associated with women. It has been associated with women who have historically become pejorative. Schultz claims that there is a 'semantic derogation of women', where words and phrases associated with women becomes negatively inflected. (Schultz, 1990). She demonstrates how the language used to describe women in leadership roles has undergone a "democratic levelling." She uses the titles "lady," "governess," "mistress," "madam," and "dame," which were once reserved for powerful women but have since spread to include other people, whilst their male counterparts have maintained their links with status.

Mills (2008) refers, "Sexism implies a picture of the connection between the sexes which is essentially antagonistic: all women arrayed against all men in the 'war of the sexes'." Sexism has been seen to be determined by our patriarchal society, where women are presented as the victims of male aggression in a society where man privileged by language. She discusses two types of sexism: overt and covert. Overt or direct sexism is easily detectable through the use of linguistic cues. Indirect sexism can only be noticed in context, whereas overt sexism has historically been linked to the articulation of beliefs that are discriminatory toward women and in which they are perceived as a less valuable group than men.

Lakoff (1973) explains that there are two types of linguistic discrimination a woman can experience: the way she is instructed to utilise her language and the way language treats them. Both tend women relegate to certain subservient capacities: that of sex-object or hireling; and that, therefore, certain lexical things cruel one thing connected to men, another to women, a

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distinction that cannot be anticipated but with reference to the distinctive roles the genders play in society.

In her book "Man Made Language", Spender (1980) describes a theory of the male domination over the English language and the systematic silencing of women through language forms, male and female speech patterns, the exclusion of women from print culture, and patriarchal systems. She says that although the English language was created by humans, it is still largely controlled by men. Sexist language may be used by people for a variety of reasons. They might act in this way because it is customary, it is ingrained in spoken and written language, and it might be difficult to change; they need information on what constitutes sexist language, they disagree that such language is sexist, or they are trying to preserve established social advancements.

4. Analysing of Sexism at Various linguistics Levels
4.1 Morphological level

Adding prefixes or suffixes or internal changes to a word makes another new word. In this process, mostly the root form is the masculine gender. The new or famine forms reflect a view that women are a deviant or subordinate group. The findings of the studies are in table 01.

Table 01: How did the masculine forms change to feminine forms through the morphological process in the stories?

		Morphological change	Remark/s
B **A**	**S1**	প্রতিবেশী+নী=প্রতিবেশিনী *protebesi*+ *ni=protibesini* (neighbor+ *ni* = *woman* neighbor) নাতি+নি=নাতনি *nati+ni=natni* (grandson+ *ni*=granddaughter) দাস+ঈ =দাসী *das + Ī = dasI* (Male slave + *Ī*= female slave)	❖ Add the bound morpheme 'i' or 'ni' with a masculine word and changes the gender to feminine. ❖ All of these cases base forms are masculine forms.

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N G L A		শশুর+ই=শাশুড়ি *sosur+i=sasuṛi* father in law + *i* = mother in law	
	S2	দাদা –দাদি, *dada- dadi* (Grandfather- Grandmother) ছোড়া-ছুড়ি *choṛa-chuṛi* (slang) (Boy- girl)	❖ Changes the last vowel 'a' to 'i', and make the masculine word into a feminine word.
	S3	ছাত্র –ছাত্রী *chattro-chattri* (Male student – Female student) অধ্যাপক–অধ্যাপিকা *odhapok-odhapika* Male professor- female professor	❖ Add the bound morpheme 'i' with a masculine word and changes the gender to feminine. ❖ Internal change of the word and makes a masculine word into a feminine word.
E N G L I S H	**S1**	hero + ic = heroic hero + ism = heroism	❖ Suffix added with masculine root. These are the common masculine terms which are used for both genders, though in the story, the central character (hero) is a girl herself..
	S2	Host+ess	❖ '-ess' suffix with masculine base 'host'.
	S3	hero + ic = heroic	❖ 'heroic' this generic term is used for a girl in the story.

Mostly the base form is a masculine word, 'Protibesi' (neighbour) is a common gender, but it has changed to feminine by adding (nI/নী) (female neighbour). In Bangla, gender changes processes with suffixes are in table 02.

Table 02: Some rules of gender change through the morphological process in Bangla and English languages.

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	Masculine base form	Suffix/s	Feminine form	Meaning in English
B A N G L A	বৃদ্ধ *bridho*	(আ) (aa)	বৃদ্ধা *bridhaa*	old man -old women
	তরুণ *torun*	('ঈ') (I)	তরুণী *toruni*	young boy -young girl
	ঠাকুর *thakur*	(আনি'‘আনী') (ani/anI)	ঠাকুরানী *thakrani*	god-goddess
	বাঘ *bagh*	ইনী' ‘ইনি' (Ini/InI)	বাঘিনি *baghini*	Tiger-tigress
ENGLISH	Actor	—ess, —ine, —trix, —a, etc.	Actress	

4.2 Generic Structure/ Term

Generic structure is also one of the most important examples of sexism in language. It is used to refer to a whole class of things. Words like 'man' and the pronoun 'he' represents the masculine gender, but sometimes these words use before both the masculine and feminine terms and make the women invisible, even when a context is clearly specified as gender-neutral. In Bangla, the uses of pronouns are different from the English language. Bangla is a gender-friendly language. There are no differences in using a pronoun for both masculine and feminine terms. Differences are observed only to show respect or honorific pronoun. For example; /tɑr/ (his/her) general purpose, /tãr/ (his/her use for elder/respect).

Table 03: **Pronouns (Gender-wise) in Bangla and English**

Pronoun				
	Masculine	**Feminine**	**Both/ Neutral**	**Remarks**
B A N			Se, ini, tini,(s/he), take, oke, (him/her) tar (his/her), tara, tinara, era (they),	Usually use /ã/ on 1st vowel to show respect,

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			jar(whose) jara (those), tader (their)	but it does not change the gender. e.g. /tãr/ / jãra/ etc
G L A				
ENG LISH	He, his, him,	She, her,	It, they, their, them, (many more)	

In addition to pronouns, some generic structures are clearly observed where women are invisible by patriarchal terms. The generic terms which are used on the selective stories are in table 04.

Table 04: **Sexist (generic) terms are used in the stories**

		Generic Term	Remark/s
B A N G L A	**S:1**	শশুরকূল *sosurkul* (father-in-law lineage) *sosur* (father in law) +*kul* (lineage) শশুরবাড়ি *sosurbari*, (father-in-law house) *sosur* (father-in-law)+*bari* (house) বেহাইবাড়ির *behaibarir* (Co-father-in-law house) *Behai (co-father-in-law)+bari (house)* পিতৃগৃহে *pittrigrehe* or বাপেরবাড়ি *baperbari,* (In father's house) *pittri (*father)+*grehe* (in house) প্রবীণলোক *probinlok* (Old man) পৈত্রিকবিষয়-আশায়*poutrikbisoy-*	❖ All these compound words are formed by two roots, 1st root is masculine, and 2nd one is place or other. ❖ If those properties belong to any woman, still it's said by the man's name. Not like : ∗ শাশুড়িকুল *Sasrikul,* (mother in law lineage) ∗ শাশুড়ির বাড়ি *Sasrirbari*(house of mother in law), ∗ বেয়ানবাড় *beyanbari* (co-father-in-law house), ∗ মায়েরবাড়ি (in mother's house) uses against of বাপেরবাড়ি (in father's house), but the connotation of use is different. Usually, used in a negative context.

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		asai (ancestor property)	* মাতৃক বিষয় আশায় (ancestor property means it comes from father sources in Bangla)
	S:2	দারোগাবাবু *darogababu* (sub-inspector) *Daroga*(sub-inspector)+*babu* (male sir), চোদ্দপুরুষ *choddopurush* (slang) *choddo* (fourteen) *purush* (male) (literary meaning forefather) স্ত্রীলোক *shtrilok* *shtri* (female) *lok* (man) (literary meaning lady.)	❖ *babu* (male sir) used for both male and female. ❖ Never say: চোদ্দমহিলা
	S:3	পৈত্রিকবাড়ি *poutrikbari* (ancestral house) নরমাংস *noromangso* (flesh of man) লোকেদের *lokeder* (Man's)	❖ *Poutrik* (ancestral) *bari* (house) is inherited from the ancestors, and ancestors may be both gender (father-mother), but the term *poutrik* (related to father) only use. ❖ *Noromagso* (flesh of human being, but the word '*noro*' means 'man', which uses as a generic term). ❖ *Lokeder* (People's) Literary meaning of the term '*loke*' means 'people', but from time to time, it is used only for the masculine gender.
E N G L	**S:1**	❖ **Hero**ic Calendar, **Hero**ism, 'New hired **man**' (Use for a girl who is the story's central character), use generic '**he**' for farmer, stranger. ❖ Orange **men's** day, ❖ 'Each of them had a real door that a **man** could go through'.	

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I S H	**S:2**	❖ Mem**sahib,** police**man, policemen.** ('Sahib' means 'sir'. Use as a polite term for male.) Sahib. 'He could stand the pain as well as any **man** until it went on too long.' *Man/men* use as a generic term. ❖ 'It would be written by someone who knew what **he** was writing of.' **He** uses here as a generic term. Also, the generic 'he' uses as a spy, fighter, and caretaker almost for all occupations mentioned in the story.
	S:3	❖ *'A girl of **heroic** spirit,'* ❖ *There is a joy like a fire that consumes a **man's** heart when **he** first sets eyes on **his** beloved". (*The generic 'man's, could be replaced with 'person' s/he, his or her) ❖ *He had met his **master** (*master opposite gender is mistress, but it is not commonly used in English).

Some other Generic terms in Bangla and English languages are in table 05.

Table 05: Generic terms in Bangla/ English languages

	Generic Term	Meaning in English	Remark/s
B A N G L A	মেয়েছেলে, ছেলেবেলা, ছেলেমানুষি. স্ত্রীলোক.	মেয়ে (girl) ছেলে boys, ছেলে (boy)বেলা (hood) ছেলে (boy) মানুষি (behave) স্ত্রী (wife) লোক (person)	There are many words ending or beginning with "ছেলে". "লোক" means people/person. It also uses as a meaning of 'man' in generic form.

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E **N** **G** **L** **I** **S** **H**	Mankind, Manpower, Chairman, Man-made, Fireman, Manhunt, Salesman, Freshman, Fisherman, Postman, Man-hour, Englishman, Frenchman, Workmanship, Statesman, Countryman, Brotherhood, Mastermind, Master plan, Gentlemen's agreement, Master of ceremonies, Master of Arts/ Science, Bachelor of Arts/Science, Best man for the job. Generic He. Provide a pencil to each one so that he can complete the form.	There are many more examples with generic *man.*

4.3 Occupational Lexis

Many words designate the worker in a given occupation. We can assume the gender of the person by that associated occupational word. As like, nurse denotes feminine gender. There are many neutral genders occupational lexis, like a teacher, doctor etc. However, people treated them as a masculine gender and used extra form/ lexis to differentiate for feminine gender. For example, use only 'doctor' for masculine gender, but for feminine, use 'lady doctor'. Nevertheless, in Bangla, the masculine form changes to the feminine form by internal changes or affixation, though some colloquial forms use the 'extra form' with the primary word. For example, চিকিৎসক *chikitsok* (male doctor), চিকিৎসিকা *chikitsika* (female doctor), but people say মহিলাডাক্তার ***mohila****daktar*. In some cases, people use masculine lexis for both genders where women are invisible but rarely use feminine lexis for both genders where men are invisible. The findings from the short stories are in table 06.

Table 06: Occupational lexicons used in the stories

		Occupational lexicons used for male in the stories	Word for female for the same occupational lexicon in the language.
B **A**	**S:1**	পাওনাদার *paonadar* (creditor), দ্বাররক্ষী *darrokhi* (gatekeeper),	❖*Pawnadar* mainly masculine gender , ❖Use ***mohila*** 'lady' before the occupational

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N G L A		ডাক্তার *daktar* (doctor)	lexicons. **মহিলাদ্বাররক্ষী, মহিলাডাক্তার** *mohila-darrokhi, mohila-daktar.*
	S:2	লেঠাল/ লেঠেল *lethal/lethel,* (fighter with sticks), চাষী *chashi* (farmer), রাখাল *rakhal* (shepherd), হাকিম *hakim* (magistrate), জোতদার *Jotdar* (rich farmer).	❖ Use ***mohila*** 'lady' or ***meye*** 'girl' before the occupational lexicons. **মহিলালেঠাল / লেঠেল, মহিলাচাষী,মেয়েরাখাল.** ❖ *Hakim* is masculine term but use for both genders. ❖ *Jotdar* doesn't have any female form.
	S:3	খালাসি *khalasi* (assistant truck driver), অধ্যাপক – *odhapok* (professor) নৃপতিরলোক *nripotirlok* People (man) who works for *Nripoti.*	❖ *Khalasi* usually uses for masculine gender. ❖ **অধ্যাপক –অধ্যাপিকা** Opposite gender of *odhapok* (professor) is *odhapika* in Bangla but in colloquial form *odhapok* uses for both the genders. ❖ *Lok* means person but it's used as male person who works for him.
E N G L I S H	**S:1**	Farmer, Stranger, Owner	Farmer**ette**, (add suffix with masculine root) **Female** Stranger, **Lady** Owner
	S:2	Mechanic, Driver, Secretary, woodcutter, Policemen/man, Officers, Barker, Spy, Fighter, Caretaker, Gunner, Cobbler, M.P, Observer.	❖ All these lexicons are neutral gender. However, without confirming the gender identity, the writer used the generic *'he'* for all these lexicons. ❖ *Mechanic, the Gunner, fighter,* usually used for Masculine gender. Use *female*

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		before this masculine term, like; - *female mechanic.* ❖ *Driver, Secretary, woodcutter, officer, Barker, Spy, caretaker, Cobbler, Observer, M.P, policeman,* used for both genders. In the language, the 'female' word is usually used before the neutral lexicon.	
	S:3	The baker, The grocer, Armies, police. Wrestler, sailor, priest, Dancer	❖*The baker, the grocer, Armies, and police:* used for both gender. ❖ *Wrestler, sailor, priest* used for masculine gender. ❖ *Dancer*: usually used for feminine gender.

4.4 Alignment of Male and Female Terms

In a patriarchal society, it is usual that men always try to keep their position at first or the beginning. This common belief can be seen in the alignment of the male-female term in both languages. In English: king and queen, mother and father, men and women, brother and sister, ***Ladies and gentlemen***, lord and lady, boys and girls, sir and madam, husband and wife, boyfriend and girlfriend etc. In Bangla: বাবা- মা, ভাই- বোন, চাচা -চাচী,শিক্ষক –শিক্ষিকা etc. The findings from the studies are in table 07.

Table 07: Alignment of male/ female terms in the stories

		Alignment of male and female terms:		Remark/s
B A N G	**S:1**	বাপ-মায়ে *bap-maye*, (father-mother) দাস-দাসী *das-dasi*, (male slave-female slave) করতা-গৃহিনী *korta-grihini* (husband-wife) শশুর-শাশুড়ি *sosur-sasuri* Father-in-law and mother-in-law		❖ *korta* literary meaning is (master), but use it for a husband.

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L A	S:2	ছেলে-মেয়ে *chele-meye* (boy-girl) বিয়াই-বেয়ান *biyan-beyan* (co-father in law- co-mother in law) পোলা- মাইয়া *pola-maiya (son-doughter)* শশুর -শাশুড়ি *sosur-sasuri* *(*father-in-law and mother-in-law) **মাইয়া –জামাই** *maiya-jamai* **(Daughter and son-in-law)**	❖ *Maiya-jamai* **(daughter –son in law).** Only one-time feminine term was used before the masculine term.
	S:3	ছাত্র - ছাত্রী *chattro-chattri,* (male student- female student) যুবক -যুবতী *jubok- juboti* (young boy -young girl) বাপ্ –মা *bap – ma* (father- mother)	
ENG LISH	S:1	Boys and Girls, Mack and Flora, **mother and father**	In all the three stories writer uses masculine term before the feminine term. Usually people use 'father and mother' but writer uses '***mother and father'***.
	S:2	Old men and the women	
	S:3	Men and women	

4.5 Sexism in Phrasal Level

4.5.1 Metaphors and Similes

The maximum number of metaphors and similes used where it is mean; man has high status and woman has low, men are active, and women are passive, man has the power of taking decision and woman has to follow that. Man is the symbol of strength, whereas the woman is the symbol of weak. The number of derogatory terms used for women is greater than for men. The findings from the studies are in table 08.

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Table 08: Metaphors and Smiles used in the stories

		Metaphors and Similes	Remark/s
B A N G L A	**S:1**	নবাবের বাড়ির মেয়ে *nobaber barir meye* (daughter of king), যেমন ঘরের মেয়ে তেমনিশ্রী *jeman ghorer meye temni sri* (Her looks is just like her family), পোড়া কাঠ হয়ে যাচ্ছে *pora kath hoye jache* (She looks like a firewood/ coal)	❖ These metaphors are used for girls only to mock them. She belongs to a low-income family but said mockingly, 'a *daughter from Nawab's house'*, to tease her and even to realise that she belongs to a low-income family. ❖ '*porakath'* commented on her physical health and that she looked like a block of burning wood.
	S:2	বেউলাসতী *beolasoti* (a chaste or faithful wife), চোরাই হুইস্কির পেগ, *chorai whiskey peg,* ঘোমটাদিবি, লাজদেখাইবি *ghomtadibi, lajdekhabi* (a girl turns her veil and should be shy), রঙিন শাড়ি ও আলুথালুবেশ, rongin sari o aluthalubes (colourful saree and dishabille or improper dress),	❖ *beolasoti*: Patriarchal term for a woman about her character, especially sexual. ❖ *chorai whiskey peg*: the man feels sexual attraction to see the girl just like he attracts to whiskey. ❖ *ghomtadibi, lajdekhabi*: In patriarchal societies, an undeclared rule is that a woman should have a veil before her husband and be shy too. ❖ *rongin sari o aluthalubes:* stereotype thinking that a girl's colourful dress or improper dress means she has /had sex.

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S:3	'মেয়েটি' *meyeti* (The girl, a call girl, a concubine, a police spy).	❖ *'Meyeti'*: is the word used throughout the story as a metaphor in different meanings. • ***মেয়েটি*** কখনো কোনো ছেলের সঙ্গে কথা বলেনা *Meyeti kokhono kono cheler songe kotha bolena* (***The girl*** never talks with any boys) (**a common girl**), • যুবকটি দেখে নেয় ***মেয়েটি*** রুমাল বের করে ঘাড় মুছলো *Jubokti dekhe ney **meyeti** rumal berk ore ghar muchlo* (The young man saw that ***the girl*** took out a handkerchief and cleaned her neck) (**a spy**), • কলকাতায় অন্তত ১৫ টা ***মেয়ের*** জন্য সময়ে সময়ে ফ্ল্যাট রাখতে হয়েছে. *Kolkatai ontoto 15 ta **meyer** jonno somoye somoye flat rakhte hoyeche.* (From time to time, he had to keep flats in Kolkata for these types of **girls)** (**a concubine),** • এসব ***মেয়ে*** আজকাল হরদম তৃতীয় শ্রীনীতে মেলে *Esob **meye** ajkal hordom tritio srinite mele* (Nowadays, these types of girls are easily available) **(call girl),**
		কত টাকা পাবি? *koto taka pabi?* (How much money will you get?) একলা আছো? *Eklaacho*	❖ *Koto taka pabi? eklaacho?* : A girl can quickly identify as a prostitute or sex girl if she stays with any man. Metaphorically these questions present her as a prostitute.

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		(Are you alone?) স্ত্রি ও এক সময়ে আম নরমাংস. *Isthiro ek somoye aam noro mangso* (At a particular time, a wife is considered ordinary flesh for man).	❖ *Isthiro ek somoye aam noro mangso*: 'At a particular time, a wife is considered ordinary flesh for man'. This metaphor means a man can forcefully have sex with his wife without her permission or behave in whatever he likes to do with her.
E N G L I S H	**S:1**	❖ Throughout the story writer metaphorically presents the discrimination between the two genders. The writer showed outside and inside position, whereas the outer part, 'the brain,' represents masculinity and '*the home or kitchen' represents* femininity. ❖ The *captive of foxes* metaphorically represents the situation of girls in our society, as they are confined in our house. ❖ *Flora's escape* presents the feeling of the girl. She knows there will be no freedom (*no wild country for her*). ❖ *Outside* or *men work* very importantly, but *women or household work* is less important than men though it is a tough job. *"It seemed to me that work in the house was endless, dreary, and peculiarly depressing; work done out of doors and in my father's service, was ritualistically important."* ❖ In the story, *the space* used by the little brother and sister is also metaphorically represented to show gender discrimination.
	S:2	❖ In this story, the writer metaphorically presents the **husband's attitudes toward the wife.** A wife is always a nurturing and submissive character though her husband constantly insults her. Several times he said: *You bitch," he said. "You rich bitch.* *This rich bitch.* *You're such a bloody fool.*

	But she always replies *I love you now. I'll always love you.* ❖ Whereas the husband has the freedom to do anything, the wife has to bind by the male-constructed rules. ❖ In our patriarchal views, we blame a man's failure on his partner or wife. In the same way, Harry blames his wife for his failure. ❖ In a patriarchal society wife's role has considered functional, somewhat respectable or romantic. The writer metaphorically presents the wife's role in her husband's life as practical rather than ideological.	
S:3	*No Gender metaphors mentioned in the story.*	

4.6 Sexism / Sensitivity on Identity

Identity is the qualities, beliefs, personality traits, appearance, or expressions characterising a person or group (Hudson, 1996). But, in our patriarchal society, women do not have identities. They are considered as a mother, sister or wife of someone. Married women resent being identified only under their husbands' names; like Mrs Hakami. In Bangla language also follows the same pattern. For example: ময়নার মা M*oynar ma* (mother of Moyna), হারুনেরস্ত্রী *Haruner isthiri* (Wife of Harun) etc. The study summarised that all the writers (in both languages) used sexism on women's identities in the same way. Conventionally the writers did not mention the women's identities in their writing. Men are the more significant figure, and they suppress women's identities. The findings from the stories are in table 09.

Table 09: **Sexism / sensitivity on Identity in the stories**

		Sensitivity on Identity	Remark/s
B A N G	**S:1**	The writer mentioned the central character's name (the girl's name 'Nirupoma') due to her symbolic meaning in the story. After the main character, the second most important character is her mother-in-law. The writer presents her as the wife of Raibahadur or the mother in the law of Nirupoma.	
		ময়নার মা *Moynar ma* (Mother of Moyna)	❖ There is no female character's name, either the main character or

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L A	**S:2**	নিতায়ের বৌ *Nitayer bou* (Wife of Nitai) মন্ডলের শাশুড়ি *Mondoler sasuri* (Mother-in-law of Mondole) হারানের বৌ *Haraner bou* (Wife of Haran) মোক্ষদার মা *Mokhodar ma* (Mother of Mokhoda) **ময়নার মার জামাই** *Moynar mar Jamai* (Son-in-law of Moyna's mother)	sub-character. All women's nature presents as someone's wife, mother or daughter. ❖ Only once time a male identity has shown under the woman's identity. The mother of Moyna is the central character of the story. She is famous in the village (in the story). Still, the writer did not mention her name. She identified by her daughter's name.
	S:3	❖ In the story, 'the girl' is the central character. But she doesn't have any name. The writer presents her with different characters. Like, a normal girl, a police spy, a concubine, a call girl etc. Her identity is not mentioned because she is useless. This type of girl an easily available in the market. ❖ On the other hand, the two main male characters (Mr M and Nripoti) identities are not mentioned due to their respectable position in society.	
E N G L I S H	**S:1**	❖ Girls' identities and women's work do not appreciate by society. The central character of the story is the girl herself, but in the story, the girl doesn't have any name, though her brother has a name, just as he is a boy. ❖ Father work (outside) is very important but mother work (homemaker) is not.	
	S:2	❖ Herry never calls his wife by name. Though his wife is a modern rich woman, the character still shows a submissive and nurturing character. ❖ All the occupational characters (though their sex is not confirmed) present as masculine characters.	
	S:3	The story centres on Marko Palamas, a "masculine man" who reveres quality and considers hostility to be courage.	

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4.7 Stereotype

Language expresses attitudes. Sexist attitudes make assumptions about people based on their gender rather than considering their particular attributes. Using sexist language reinforces gender stereotypes. Therefore, the study of sexist language is primarily focused on how language conveys both positive and negative preconceptions of both men and women. Holmes (2013) the study's focus has been on the ways that language perpetuates derogatory attitudes against women. The findings from the stories are in table 10.

Table 10: Stereotype mentioned in the stories

		Stereotype in the story	Remark/s
B A N G L A	**S:1**	❖ A stereotypical image of a girl's mother in law house and her mother in low's behaviour is present in the story.	
	S:2	❖ পাড়াবেড়ানি *paraberani* (A woman unnecessarily visits her neighbourhood) নিন্দাছড়ানি *nindachorani* (a woman gossip in her neighbourhood) ❖ ঘ্যানঘেনে তীক্ষ্ণ গলা, *ghan ghene thikhno gola* (her sharp whining sound) ❖ ও মাইয়া সব পারে, *o maiya sob pare* (the girl can do anything (negative sense) ❖ মাইয়া কার লগে শুয়েছিল, *maiyakar loge suyechilo* (The girl slept with who?)	❖ Stereotype of women's character. Women unnecessarily visit and gossip in their neighbourhood. ❖ Woman's sound is sharp and whining. ❖ A woman fulfils her desire without concerning any societal norms. ❖ A man can sleep with a girl, but if a girl sleeps with a man means she had sex with him.

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	S:3	❖ বিধবা মসুর ডাল আর হলুদ ছোননা *bidhoba mosur dhal ar holud chhonna.* (A widow does not touch the lentils and turmeric.) বিধবা *bidhoba* (A widow) রক্ষিতা rokhita (A concubine)	❖ *Bidhoba, rokhita*: these patriarchal terms are used only for women. Social stereotypes or patriarchal norms are only for Women, especially for the widow.

E N G L I S H	**S:1**	❖ The writer presents society's weak and stereotypical views of women's character or work. As men should work outside and women inside of the house (kitchen).
		    She did not often come out of the house unless it was to do something.
		    She sees the inside of the house as her mother's territory,
		 ❖ Father's work is important, and mother's work is valueless.
		    ".. in my father's service, was ritualistically important."
		 ❖ Our society's stereotypical views' Girls cannot do heavy work' reflect by the girl's work in the story. She intended to be her father's helper, but she was neglected.
		    "Wait till Laird gets a little bigger, then you'll have a real help"
		 "I thought it was only a girl."
		 ❖ Some more stereotypical societal norms are also mentioned in the story. As;
		    "Girls don't slam doors like that."
		 "Girls keep their knees together when they sit down."
		 And worse still, when I asked some questions, "That's none of girls' business."	

	S:2	❖ The writer presents stereotypical man and woman characters. A man (husband) who tries to control his wife and a woman (wife) who tolerates how her husband behaves.	

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		❖ The writer presents women are weak and subordinate to men.
		❖ Women are seductive and over-sexualized.
	S:3	❖ The story focuses on a stereotypical "**manly man**" or "**macho man**" who admires the strength and sees aggression as bravery. The way the hero presents in the story gives an image of Sexist, patriarchal and testosterone fuelled. The man becomes infatuated with the girl and then proceeds to harass her for her affection until she agrees.
		❖ In the story, we see a girl's opinion or rejection is ignored. In man's world, we ignore a girl's opinion. A man considers a girl's hesitation as her consent. This stereotypical fact reflects in the story:
		"Her **subterfuge** so apparent. Trying to conceal her pleasure at my interest."
		❖ A typical stereotypical girl's qualities are mentioned by her father. As per our societal norms, a girl should know about cooking; she must be good in the kitchen.
		"She is also a terrible cook. She cannot fry an egg without burning it."
		"She cannot make pilaf and lamb with squash." He paused.
		"She is useless in the kitchen"

4.8 Idioms and Proverbs

A proverb is a straightforward, wise traditional phrase that conveys a fact that is believed to be true based on common sense or experience. But, in our society, we see the nature of the proverb usually reflects the negative thought, beliefs or attitudes towards women. From the head to the foot, there are proverbs about women that describe and define the ideal form and importance of nearly every aspect of her body. There are numerous proverbs that describe what makes a woman. There is a lengthy list of qualities for women in proverbs: Some proverbs are mentioned in the selective short stories, and others have been taken from the languages. Bangla story 2: এক মেয়ের সাত জামাই, _ekmeyer sat jamai_a _(_girl has many husbands). (In a patriarchal society, a girl is treated with a loose character if she has contact with some or many boys). মাইয়া আছে কত জামাই জুটবে, _maiya ache koto jamai jutbe_ (if there is a girl, easily boys will come

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by her attraction). *রোজ নতুন নতুন জামাই জুটবে roz notu notun jamai jutbe* (everyday will get a new son in law). (In a patriarchal society, a man may have relations with many women, but a woman is considered a prostitute if she has relations with more than one man).

Table 11: Some more sexist proverbs from Bangla and English languages

Proverb in Bangla	Explanation in English
1.**মহিলাদের** কাজ বাড়ির ভিতরে, **মহিলাদের** কাজ কখনও শেষ হয় না 2.ভক্তি হলো অজ্ঞতার **কন্যা;** অজ্ঞ তাই ভক্তি করে, 3. লজ্জা **নারীর** ভূষণ, 4. হলুদ জব্দ সিলে, **বৌ** জব্দ কিলে, 5.সংসার সুখে হয় **রমণীর** গুনে, 6. **পুরুষের** জেদে হয় বাদশা, **নারীর** জেদে হয় বেশ্যা, 7.**ভাই** বড়ো ধন হয় রক্তের বাঁধনে, যদিওপৃথক হয় **নারীর** কারণে, 8.কোথায় কথা বাড়ে, জলে বাড়ে ধান বাপের বাড়ি থাকলে **মেয়ে** বাড়ে অপমান.	1. Women should remain in the home, cooking, clearing and raising children. 2. Devotion is the daughter of ignorance; Ignorance breeds devotion. (Sometimes people admire someone or something because they don't have any idea about that.) 3. Shyness is considered an ornament of women. 4. Turmeric snubbed in metate (stone slab) women snubbed by the punch. 5. Happiness comes in a family through a woman's quality. 6. A man's stubbornness makes him a king, but a woman's stubbornness makes her a whore. 7. A brother is wealthy if he has a blood relation with him, though he separated because of women. 8. Talk creates talk, paddy grows in water, and It is insulting for a woman if she stays in her father's house.
Proverbs in English	

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1. All men are mortal

2. A man of straw is worth of a woman of gold

3. If the husband be not at home, there is nobody

4. Man, woman and devil are three degrees of comparison

5. A woman's advice is never to seek.

6. A woman and a glass are ever in danger

7. Women are wavering as the wind

8. Daughters and dead fish are not keeping wares

9. It is harder to marry a daughter well than to bring her up well

10. Marry a wife of thine own degree.

5. Conclusion

This paper discussed the different linguistic types of sexism involved in short stories in both languages. All the writers (Bangla or English) used sexist items in their writing. One sex-neutral pronoun will not ensure that women will be treated similarly to men. Bangla does not have gender problems for a pronoun (neutral pronoun) like he or she. But still, in the language, men and women are treated very unequally. It is very difficult to mention which language (Bangla or English) is more sexism free. Both languages use sexism or biased term for the feminine gender.

No time scale that can be pointed to when sexist terms, words or expressions or sexism, in commonly, started to seem within the lexicon of Bangla or English languages. There's no doubt that they do exist. And there's no question that they are more than cautiously or incautiously utilised, which can be for numerous reasons. These may be for socio-economic conditions, socialisation, and traditional culture and religion variables. In comparison with English language users, still, Bangla language users are more unconscious of sexism in their language. This may be for lack of education in a society, or the topic 'sexism' is not much discussed in the language. For example, nowadays, English speakers use 'homemaker' instead' of 'housewife'. Bangla already has the lexicon (গৃহিণী) *grihini (who takes care of home)*', which is equivalent to the term 'homemaker' but if you ask a Bengali: What does your mother do? Mostly says nothing or stays at home. In English, after lots of feminist arguments, protests and political

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correctness, nowadays, people are more conscious about using language. But, still, in Bangla, we need a lot of corrections. Like the compound lexicon "রাষ্ট্রপতি" *rastrapoti* (President) "রাষ্ট্র" *Rastro* means 'state' and 'পতি' *poti* means 'husband' use for both male and female person. The opposite gender of 'পতি' *poti* 'husband' is 'পত্নী' *potni* 'wife'. But we cannot use the term "রাষ্ট্রপত্নী" *'Rashtrapatni'* for a female president. Recently in the Indian parliament, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury referred to President as 'Rashtrapatni'. And he had to apologise for his remarks. It was considered a sexist remark though Hindi and Bangla have the same meaning and structure of that word (Mathew, 2022).

A story or writing reflects the social reality of the writers. Writers use sexism in their writing which is followed by social background. Sexism in languages is related to the phenomenon of sex separation in society. It is an opinion that language is not only a mirror which reflects social reality but to an instrument to propagate the social structure. Language planning may direct in; (i) more and more research on the sexism items of the language, (ii) eliminating sex inequality terms and developing neutral terms in language, (iii) focus on more participation and giving power to women in social life, (iv) create more awareness about sexism items with speakers of the language, (v) political will power to alter the social structure till the day when women and men possess equal status can language uniformity be really accomplished.

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APPENDIX: A

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The six Short Stories used in the study.

Bangla Short Story

S 1: Denapaona

Plot: Nirupama was a lovely and mature girl of RamshundarMitra. She was married to the son of Raybahadur. She was being tormented within the house of in-laws since her father did not seem to meet the proposed dowry. Ramshunder sold his house for that, but she prohibited her father from providing the dowry. Due to their tormenting life, she was greatly careless, almost her claim wellbeing, and finally, she passed on.

Writer: *Rabindranath Tagore* (1861–1941) was an Indian polymath who worked as an artist, author, writer, composer, logician, social reformer and painter. He reshaped Bengali literature and music with relevant innovation within the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He became (1913) the primary non-European and the primary lyricist to win the Nobel Prize in literature.

S 2: Haraner Nat-Zamai

Plot: The story is composed against the foundation of the "TeBhaga" movement in Bengal. The slogan of the movement was "arrive at the tiller". The movement was against the corrupted landlords, wealthy wholesale merchants and middlemen. Within the story, the suspected Bhuban Mondal, who initiates the rural movement, takes shelter in the Mother of Moyna's house. She gives him a shield and hoodwinks the police by saying that the man is her son-in-law. The genuine son-in-law comes to know about the fact and gets angry. However, when the misunderstanding is over again, the police arrest them. Finally, the police faced a massive protest from villagers.

 Writer: *Manik Bandyopadhyay* (1908-1956) is an Indian Litterateur respected as one of the significant figures of 20th-century Bengali writing. Amid a life expectancy of 48, a long time and 28, a long-time of a scholarly career, combating epilepsy from around 28 and money-related strains, he created a few showstoppers of books and brief stories, a few sonnets, papers etc. He was granted the Sahitya Foundation Grant in 1992, the Padma Shri in 1999 and the Padma Bhushan in 2014.

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S 3: Sorir

Plot: The story is about a sad tribal girl. She grew up in a government orphan house when her parents were hanged for murder. She lost his parents and tried to lead a difficult life. After that, she was caught by the police for theft, and since then, she has been working as per the instructions of the police; sometimes, she works as a spy of the police or works as a concubine of an influential leader. At the story's end, a boy who was in her infatuation seeks shelter from her. She agrees to shelter him and recalls her past. However, without understanding her background and situation, he considers her a prostitute that touchy she commits suicide.

Writer: *Mahasweta Devi* (1926 – 2016) was an Indian author in Bengali and an activist. Her outstanding scholarly works incorporate *Hajar ChurashirMaa, Rudali*, and *AranyerAdhikar.* She was respected with different scholarly grants such as the *Sahitya Akademi* Grant (in Bengali), Jnanpith Grant and Ramon Magsaysay Grant, and India's civilian grants Padma Shri and Padma Vibhushan.

English Short Story

S 1: Boys and Girls

Plot: An anonymous young lady describes the story. She is the central character of the story. She works outside with her father, but the traditional society does not value her work, as society expects a girl to work inside the house rather than a free and independent woman. The young lady is stood up to by the desires and boundaries set on her throughout the story. She tries to battle them, and Flora, a horse, gives her some encouragement and motivation.

Writer: *Alice Ann Munro* (1931) is a Canadian short story writer who won the Nobel Prize in Writing in 2013. Munro's work has been depicted as revolutionizing the engineering of brief stories, particularly in its propensity to move forward and reverse in time.

S 2: The Snows of Kilimanjaro

Plot: Harry, an author, and his spouse, Helen, are stuck on a safari in Africa. The bearing of their truck was burned, and Harry suffered from his infected leg. They were waiting for the rescue plane though he knew it would not arrive on time. While waiting, Helen was nursing him and

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taking care of him though Harry spends his time drinking and insulting her. Harry recalls his life, realizing that he wasted his ability through lingering and extravagance from a marriage to a well-off lady he does not love.

Writer: *Ernest Miller Hemingway* (1899 –1961) was an American writer, short-story essayist, and writer. Hemingway delivered most of his work between the mid-1920s and the mid-1950s and was awarded the 1954 Nobel Prize in Literature. He published seven books, six short-story collections, and two nonfiction works.

S 3: The Wooing of Ariadne

Plot: The story centres on Marko Palamas, a stereotypical "manly man" who idolizes quality and sees hostility as bravery. He gets infatuated with Ariadne without knowing anything about her but concludes that she is the love of his life because she is lovely, beautiful and unreachable. He, at that point, continues to annoy her for her warmth, demonstrating that he is worthy of her until Ariadne concurs to go on a date with him.

Writer: *Harry Check Petrakis* (1923 – 2021) was an American writer and author of short stories. As the writer of twenty-four books and beneficiary of prestigious awards, respects and assignments, and a scholarly association, Petrakis enhanced American fiction by examining human tribulation through his characters.

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