

GENDER AND FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION:  
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF A MANDATED  
PROVINCIAL CURRICULUM

by

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B.A., The University of British Columbia, 1993

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
(School of Family and Nutritional Sciences)

We accept this thesis as conforming  
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

July 1998

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## ABSTRACT

Traditionally school-based family life education courses were offered as electives with primarily female enrolment. Recently, however, many of these programs have been mandated for all students, highlighting the need for inclusive curricula. In British Columbia, the *Career and Personal Planning* curriculum has been mandated for all of B.C.'s students. The purpose of this study was to evaluate selected aspects of the *Career and Personal Planning 8-12 (CAPP)* curriculum documents to determine whether they are inclusive with respect to gender. Methods of content analysis were used to identify content relating to the concepts of gender, work and family. The study was guided by a framework developed from the feminist literature in family life education. Findings from the analysis revealed that the majority of content dealt with work-related topics, with significantly less attention given to the concept of family, and minimum attention given to the concept of gender. Of the gender-related material, the majority focused on two sub-topics: gender and changing work patterns, and gender's effect on job availability. However, much of this content was found to be superficial, exploratory in nature, and narrow in focus. Missed opportunities within the curriculum to deal with gender issues, particularly in relation to work and family, were also identified. Based on the findings of the content analysis it was concluded that the curriculum may best be characterized as gender absent. Implications for curriculum developers, teachers, and researchers are identified and opportunities for future research is discussed.

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## Acknowledgement

My sincere thanks to Dr. Margaret Arcus for her tireless efforts on this project. Her contributions and insights were invaluable to this thesis. I am also grateful to the other members of my committee, Dr. Eleanore Vaines and Dr. Deirdre Kelly, for their comments and suggestions. Finally, thanks to my parents, family members, and friends who supported, encouraged, and guided me when I needed it the most.

**Dedication**

To Daymon- who has taught me more about family than books ever could.  
Thank-you.



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Socializing youth for the responsibilities of family life has always been necessary, with most of the responsibility for this task assigned to the family. In the past much was learned informally as youth observed or participated in family interactions, or as they participated more formally in initiations and puberty rites. However, a rapidly changing society required that families and society as a whole find additional means to help with these socialization efforts (Kirkendall, 1973).

The formal involvement of institutions in socializing both young and old about family living began to emerge with the onset of industrialization and urbanization. Kirkendall (1973) claimed that "as industrialization proceeds and as more and more people live in congested urban areas, strains and tensions arise that tend to disrupt family living" (p. 696). In his view, the new stresses placed on families made them structurally weak and led society to seek ways to strengthen families; thus, outside agencies such as public schools, churches, and other societal organizations began to support and supplement family socialization efforts through formal educational programs. The combined efforts of these organizations resulted in a movement known formally as "family life education" (Kirkendall, 1973).

School-based family life education (FLE) first appeared in British Columbia's schools in 1914 with the introduction of the Home Economics curriculum (Thomas, 1986). This curriculum was developed to educate girls about home and family life in an effort to "improve the quality of life and the moral and spiritual development of the family" (Thomas, 1986, p. 2). However, since these early beginnings, school-based FLE has expanded from educating young girls about domestic

issues in the home to educating students of both genders on a wide variety of topics including family relationships, child rearing, communication skills, developing self-esteem, responsibility for one's behaviour and sexual health and development. Over time, FLE has become well established and widely accepted as part of the school curriculum (Arcus, 1983).

Not only has family life education become accepted in the schools, but the recent trend has been to mandate FLE for all students. Traditionally FLE courses were offered as electives with primarily female enrolment (Lewis-Rowley, Brasher, Moss, Duncan, and Stiles, 1993). As these courses have become mandated, attention has been directed to the need for inclusive education. Inclusive education acknowledges both societal diversity and the diversity of the learners in the classroom (Hildreth and Sugawara, 1993). According to Walker (1993), for a curriculum to be inclusive, it must "include all under represented groups" (p. 342).

However, FLE has long been criticized for its focus on programs for middle-class Caucasian females and for its failure to attend to important social categories such as culture, diverse family forms, social class, and gender (MacDermid, Jurich, Myers-Walls and Pelo, 1992; Walker, 1993). For example, because FLE programs have tended to emphasize uniformity rather than diversity, the focus has been placed on the norms and practices of the dominant culture (Hildreth & Sugawara, 1993). Gordon (1964) termed this "Anglo conformity" and suggested that middle-class Anglo Saxons are considered the standard for success, with all other cultural groups being compared to them. Anglo conformity is evident, for example, in the parent education literature where only one ethnic group at a time has been compared with Caucasian families (Julian, McKenry & McKelvey, 1994). As well, many family life education programs are based on research carried out with only Caucasian families (Kieren & Doherty-Poirier, 1993). Thus, these

programs may reflect a limited perspective and a lack of sensitivity to both cultural differences and similarities. When the primary focus of FLE is on white, middle-class families, "Participants who vary from that ethnic or economic background may feel uncomfortable or inadequate, and are likely to avoid the experience altogether" (MacDermid et al., 1992, p. 35).

The emphasis on uniformity within FLE has also meant that diverse family forms have often been ignored within the field. Recent research on families has shown that the nuclear family is no longer the dominant family structure in North America. For example, it is estimated that 13% of children in the United States currently live in stepfamilies, and 50% of today's children will eventually be in a stepfamily, either as a parent or child (Nolan, Coleman and Ganong, 1984). Further, little attention has been given to couples who choose to remain childless. Yet it is estimated that between 20% and 25% of the baby-boom cohort will remain child free (Seecombe, 1991). Despite these changes, many FLE programs continue to focus on and/or maintain assumptions about the traditional nuclear family even though this family structure is clearly becoming less and less the norm (Allen & Baber, 1992).

Family life education has also failed to address the issue of social class. Hughes and Perry-Jenkins (1996) claim that, although the FLE literature has given limited attention to gender and ethnicity as factors that might effect FLE, social class as a factor has been ignored all together. They reviewed the literature pertaining to social class differences in parenting and marriage. In addition, they reviewed the FLE literature which considers how families of varying social classes respond to family life education. They found that families of varying social classes respond differently to the content and teaching methods used in family life education programs. They conclude that there are "important class differences in family processes and interventions that have

been overlooked in the design of family life education programs" (p. 181). Thus, social class is an important consideration for family life education programs.

Finally, and of most significance to this study, FLE has not adequately addressed issues of gender. Most FLE programs have historically focused on female experiences (Kotash, 1987; Thomas, 1992), and the perception that family life education is female education persists today. To some extent, this perception may reflect the realities of school-based FLE in particular. A recent Canadian national survey indicated that, although male enrolments are increasing, significantly more girls than boys are enrolled in high school FLE classes (Arcus, Paton & Thomas, 1995). Even in classes which are coeducational, interactions within the classroom often reveal a female orientation. The content and teaching methods used may reflect a female perspective (e.g. emphasizing the experience of being pregnant), and leave out the male point of view (Thomas, 1992). Given the increasing number of male students in elective courses and the recent trend toward mandating FLE for both males and females, it is important to ensure that programs and materials are inclusive of both female and male experiences.

There is an interesting paradox, however. Although FLE has, to a large extent, focused on females, some argue that it is the male perspective that has conceptualized females within the broader field of family studies (Bubolz and McKenry, 1993). That is, at the same time that FLE programs have been criticized for "being too female oriented", these programs are based on literature "helping to perpetuate traditional social roles, male domination, and structures of inequality" (Bubolz and McKenry, 1993, p. 152). The overriding male perspective in education is viewed by some feminists as part of a wider system of patriarchy which effects all social institutions. Many feminists believe that "teaching about families from a feminist perspective is

likely to result in more effective family life education than teaching from the more traditional perspectives" (MacDermid et al., 1992, p. 31). Clearly, for FLE to be inclusive of both genders, curriculum documents need to be both female and male oriented while eliminating the traditional male perspective common in many social institutions.

One of the basic operating principles of FLE is that "family life education should be based on the needs of individuals and families" (Arcus, Schvaneveldt, and Moss, 1993, p. 15). The Ministry of Education apparently shares this goal for the B.C. school system as it states "the education system is committed to delivering education that is relevant to students' individual needs" (Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education, 1994, p. 20). Further, the *Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Plan* developed for schools in B.C. in 1994 states "The education system is committed to providing programs designed to provide equitable opportunities for all students, including those who face particular challenges because of geographical, physical, mental, or **social factors** {emphasis added}" (p. 20). Adapting programs to the needs of participants becomes increasingly important as classrooms in B.C. become even more diverse than in the past and as family life programs become mandated.

In 1995, the British Columbia Ministry of Education implemented a new mandated curriculum in all high schools. This curriculum, *Career and Personal Planning 8-12 (CAPP)*, includes a family life education component and "focuses on preparing students to make and implement plans in order to meet their personal, education, and career goals" (Province of B.C., Ministry of Education, 1995a, p. 1). Thus, if this curriculum is to be inclusive, it should be designed to be relevant to the needs of both the male and female students who have been mandated to take this curriculum.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate selected aspects of British Columbia's *CAPP* curriculum documents to determine whether they are inclusive with respect to gender. It should be noted that while the *CAPP* curriculum was not developed as a curriculum focused specifically on gender, given its focus on both work and personal lifestyles including family, gender is a relevant factor. For the purpose of this study, gender is defined as "the socially constructed concepts of feminine and masculine that typically accompany the sexual biological categories of females and males" (Bubolz and McKenry, 1993, p. 134). Thus, attention will be directed toward gender as a factor in work and family-related experiences rather than to any potential gender-related differences such as learning styles or abilities. It is recognized that in these experiences, gender interacts with other factors such as socio-economic class and ethnicity. However, in this study, attention will be focused only on gender. Methods of content analysis will be used to identify gender topics, implicit and explicit messages about gender, and underlying values and beliefs about gender in these documents. A feminist perspective, based on family life education literature and developed by the author, will be used to guide the investigation and discuss the findings.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Two bodies of literature relevant to the proposed study will be reviewed. First, studies which have examined educational materials in family life education will be reviewed, followed by studies which have examined gender in instructional materials in other subject areas such as English and Social Studies.

#### Review of Family Life Education Literature

The studies reviewed in this section have attempted to determine if some type of bias is present in FLE curricula or textbooks. The term "bias" is used frequently within this literature and is commonly defined as "a predisposed point of view" or "prejudice" (Stein and Su, 1980, p. 86). This term and definition will be used similarly in this review. Attention in these studies have been given to different types of bias including gender, cultural and family structure bias.

Ehrlich (1971) conducted one of the earliest analyses of FLE materials. She examined six "standard" college-level marriage and family textbooks, published in 1964 or later and written for sociology classes, to determine how females were presented in each of them. Each comment about females which "seemed to be an unsupported value judgement or a statement of dubious scientific worth" (p. 421) was identified and placed into one of four categories: sexual attitudes, sex roles and socialization, mate selection, and working women. Ehrlich found that most statements about females were obvious stereotypes and folklore, yet they typically were presented as factual information and used to justify women's subordinate status. Two examples from Kephart's 1966 text illustrate this claim: "in general, non-response or frigidity is more characteristic of the female of the species" (p. 35) and "it would be an exceptional case, indeed, where a woman assessed a man

in terms of his potential as a sex partner" (p. 318-319). Ehrlich concluded that there is little that is "value free" about social science in the texts she reviewed.

Trudell and Whatley (1992) reviewed two high school sexuality education curricula for content about gender: 1) *Sex Respect: The Option of True Sexual Freedom* (Mast, 1986, 1990) and, 2) *Human Sexuality: Values and Choices* (Search Institute, 1985, 1986). Four sex-equity goals as the framework for their analysis. These goals were:

- "1)Biologically-determined sex roles would be replaced with flexible, socially constructed gender roles and, female and male similarities rather than differences would be emphasized,
- 2) Sexuality would be presented as a positive and pleasurable aspect of life for both females and males, with sexual feelings and drives, potential for pleasure, and ability for self-control acknowledged for both sexes,
- 3) Heterosexual assumptions would be eliminated, including de-emphasis on dating and marriage as outcomes for students, presentation of intercourse as only one of many acceptable forms of sexual expression, and recognition of homosexuality as a viable form of sexual expression for many, and
- 4) Common standards of sexual behaviour and mutual responsibility for sexual communication, decision making, and behaviour would be established for both sexes, with education against violence directed toward potential perpetrators as well as potential victims" (p. 307).

Using this framework, Trudell and Whatley analyzed student materials, such as student workbooks and videotapes, and found that neither curriculum provided sex equitable content. For example, boys were consistently portrayed as sexual aggressors and girls were identified as responsible for sexual restraint and abstinence. According to the authors, *Values and Choices* tended to have less overt sexism than *Sex Respect*, but both curricula offered a single perspective on sexuality with few alternatives for teens.

de Frain (1977) reviewed 53 parenting manuals for gender bias. Specifically, he analyzed how the authors of popular parenting literature dealt with the issue of parental roles and who should bear the direct responsibility for rearing children. These books were selected from places where



parents were likely to find them, such as bookstores and news-stands. Of the 53 manuals, de Frain found that only 18 even discussed the topic of sex roles. In these 18 manuals, the majority of authors sanctioned the traditional roles of parents. According to de Frain (1977), the authors appeared to "implicitly or explicitly accept the traditional roles of father as the dominant bread winner and mother as the nurturant caretaker" (p. 251). Only 2 of 18 authors questioned the value of the traditional female role or the basis for assuming differences between the behaviours of mothers and fathers.

In a similar study, Scott-Jones & Peebles-Wilkins (1986) gathered information on parental roles and sex role socialization by examining popular parenting manuals and parent education programs. Although the authors did not provide information regarding their methods, it can be assumed that their findings are based on analysis of the texts and programs. They found that most parenting manuals and programs do not give attention to sex-equity issues. For example, most manuals advocated some sex-typing in the parental roles. Similarly, the authors of these manuals agreed that while some goals of socialization should be shared for boys and girls, the traditional distinctions between the sexes is healthy. The parenting programs focused almost exclusively on mothers and typically did not include content on the equitable treatment of male and female children.

In an attempt to replicate previous studies (Bigner, 1972; Stendler, 1950), Bigner and Yang (1996) used content analysis to examine popular parenting literature published between 1972 and 1990. As in the earlier studies, content analysis was used to identify main topics and contemporary trends in parental advice giving in three popular women's magazines (*Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Redbook*). After examining the themes which emerged from the content

analysis, the authors identified a number of common recommendations for good child rearing practices made by the magazine writers. Only those recommendations that relate to issues of sex-equity will be reported here. Many of the writers recommended that the parental role be defined in more androgynous terms, with fewer distinctions made between the behaviours of men and women as parents. It was also recommended that women reconcile being a mother and being employed outside the home, and that fathers become more involved in child rearing. In general, the magazine articles reviewed were found to advocate sex-equity.

Studies of educational materials have investigated other topics besides gender. These are included because they broaden our knowledge about the kinds of content analyses carried out in the areas of FLE and Family Studies. The inclusion of black families in marriage and family textbooks was the focus of a study carried out by Bryant and Coleman (1988). Twenty-five college-level texts were reviewed to identify the perspective used by the authors and to determine how those topics most frequently identified with black families were addressed. This information on black families was identified by examining the table of contents and indexes for key words such as "blacks", "interracial marriage", and "slavery". The number of pages and photographs devoted to black families were counted in order to determine the general coverage of these topics. Results indicated that black families were increasingly included in textbooks, that fewer texts relied on outdated research, and that more authors were moving away from use of the deficit-family model in discussing black families.

Whatley (1988) examined 16 college-level sexuality textbooks for racial bias. Although she did not describe her method of analysis, she investigated the types of images that were included or were absent in the texts and the kinds of messages that these images conveyed. She chose to

examine photographs because they "can have more impact on students reading a textbook, since, even if they are posed, they may be seen as true, objective pictures of reality" (p. 140). Whatley found that, although blacks had gained in representation, this positive step was undermined by the subtle messages portrayed by the photographs which represented common stereotypes and the fears of the white population. For example, Whatley (1988) found that four of the sixteen texts contained a photograph of a pimp, with all four of them black. According to Whatley, this is disturbing since the smaller numbers of images of blacks gave each representation more weight.

Nolan, Coleman and Ganong (1984) analyzed the content of 26 college-level marriage and family textbooks to determine the extent to which stepfamilies were presented. Selection of textbooks was based on the recommendations of seven textbook publishers and four individuals who teach introductory marriage and family courses. Key words such as "stepparent" and "blended families" were used to locate relevant discussions in each text and the identified pages were then analyzed and coded in to one of three major categories: 1) factors related to successful functioning, 2) sources of stress, and 3) recommendations for facilitating stepfamily relationships. Results indicated that the majority of texts gave little or no attention to stepfamilies. Information that was provided on stepfamilies was typically based on older studies and used a deficit-family model approach. The authors conclude that marriage and family textbooks are biased in their presentation of families because of their focus on the traditional nuclear family and omission of stepfamilies and other important family forms.

Conclusions. Because only a few studies have analyzed school based curricula and textbooks and fewer still have examined issues of gender, this review has included studies which

examine a variety of documents and issues. For this reason, it is somewhat difficult to compare and summarize studies. However, a few general conclusions can be drawn.

Researchers who examined curricula and texts for potential gender bias (Bigner & Yang, 1996; Ehrlich, 1971; de Frain, 1977; Scott-Jones & Peebles-Wilkins, 1986; Trudell & Whatley, 1992) found that the educational materials tended to endorse, implicitly or explicitly, inequity between males and females. Stereotypes and traditional gender roles were commonly presented in many FLE materials. Only the most recent study (Bigner and Yang, 1996) reported a shift from gender bias toward sex-equity in popular parenting literature.

The two studies which examined racial bias (Bryant & Coleman, 1988; Whatley, 1988) reported some gains in reducing racial bias in FLE materials, with blacks written about and pictured more than in the past. However, blacks were still portrayed in limited contexts and racial stereotypes still prevailed.

The single study that examined diverse family forms (Nolan, Coleman & Ganong, 1984) indicated clearly that stepfamilies had been neglected as an alternative family form within FLE. Allen and Baber (1992) suggest this finding can be extended to other family forms including gay and lesbian parents, single parent households, and parents who cohabit. Thus, a continued bias toward traditional family forms and the implication that all other family forms are in some way deficient is demonstrated.

In sum, each of the analyses revealed a significant degree of bias within the family life material. While some bias was overt with obvious stereotypes and value-laden statements that could not be scientifically supported, researchers found other material to contain bias that was subtle and implicit but present none the less.

### Review of Other Related Literature

Nixon Wall (1992) examined novels used in high school classrooms to determine if gender bias was present and whether "both girls and boys were experiencing an equal chance at making connections between texts and their own lives" (p. 25). Twenty-one of the most commonly used novels were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analyses indicated that 86% of the novels were written by males and that 82% of the main characters in the novels were male. The qualitative results indicated different codes for what was sexually acceptable in society. That is, what was "normal" for an adolescent male was seen as "abnormal" and unacceptable for an adolescent female. In general, male characters provided more positive role models since they were portrayed as more powerful, more confident, and more adventurous than female characters. Nixon Wall (1992) concluded that in order for the female perspective to gain a place in literature, female characters must be given a more dominant role in novels.

Studies have found that romance is one of the organizing principles of life for teenage girls (Christian-Smith, 1987). Therefore, Christian-Smith (1987) examined adolescent romance novels to understand how notions of femininity are constructed and what adolescents read about the power relations between males and females. Semiotic analysis was used to analyze thirty-four adolescent romance novels written over a period of four decades. This method uses sets of codes through which meaning is produced. In these novels, teenage girls were consistently portrayed in simplistic ways, as either good or bad, strong or weak. Further, girls were depicted as passive and powerless, especially in the realm of romance and sexuality, where they must wait for the boys to ask them out on a date or to give them their first kiss. This first kiss acts as a right of passage and ushers them in to womanhood. Christian-Smith (1987) concluded that teen romance novels continue to maintain

traditional views of what should constitute young women's lives. In doing so these books preserve the social structure and do little to broaden the possibilities for young women.

Villanueva-Collado (1988) examined works read by students in a college-level literature course to determine the extent to which gender and race were integrated. He feels that "instructors assume that presentation of materials by women or ethnics in itself constitutes integration enough of gender and race into literature curriculum" (p. 53). Although a content analysis of each of the works was not carried out, the classroom discussions around the integration of gender and race into selected dramas, short stories and poetry are presented and provide useful information. Students debated the relationship between gender, race and power in a number of works including "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", where Prufrock is a weak and marginal character and therefore was perceived by some students to be feminine in nature. The author concluded that both the material and the classroom framework from which the material was presented was biased in nature.

Sleeter and Grant (1991) investigated the treatment of various marginalized groups, including women and ethnic minorities, in textbooks written for Social Studies, Reading, Math and Science. Forty-seven elementary school textbooks were examined in order to understand how diversity issues of race, class, gender and disability were projected to school children. Texts were examined for sexist language and "loaded" words that contained reference to racial or sex stereotypes. These texts were found to be biased in their discussion and inclusion of diverse groups. For example, in the Social Studies texts, minority groups were discussed "only during time periods or events of particular concern to Whites" (p. 85-86) while the female story was "undertold or presented as an afterthought" (p. 86). Books used in Reading and Language Arts were found to depict only middle-class people with character traits that tended to be sex-stereotypic.

Conclusions. One important theme emerges from this review: regardless of the subject area, females tend to be written out or be invisible. The novels commonly used in English were written mainly by male authors and contained mostly male protagonists. In instances where female characters were central to the novel, they were portrayed as weaker, less interesting and "abnormal" compared to their fictional male counterparts (Nixon Wall, 1992). Even in the literary realm of teen romance which is specifically aimed at females, women are presented in simplistic and passive ways.

In Social Studies texts, women and minority ethnic groups were not depicted as having an active or important role at any time in history. The female story is often untold or simply an afterthought, while non-whites are included only in a context that relates to a historical period or event directly relevant to them. Nixon Wall (1992) states that biased materials which are "presented to students in a formal educational setting leads to an unconscious understanding that this is the natural order of things" (p. 26). The total spectrum of female and male experiences must be presented in an equitable way (Nixon Wall, 1992). Further, by presenting gender and racial biases, the texts served as a means of social control, maintaining the traditional white, middle-class male world view. It is from this viewpoint that knowledge is selected and the "truth" about the world is told to students (Nixon-Wall, 1992).

Limitations. There are several limitations to these studies. First, with the exception of Trudell and Whatley (1992), authors either did not use or did not report using a framework or perspective upon which they based their research. By not using a framework the research questions being asked are often unclear to the reader.

Second, although most researchers used methods of content analysis, they failed to specify how this analysis was done or provided only brief descriptions. Nixon-Wall (1992), for example, referred to "quantitative and qualitative analyses" but did not provide any detailed information regarding analytic procedures. Further, using content analysis can create a paradox since those authors that worked hardest at presenting non-sexist, non-racist material may receive the most criticism. This is because the authors who have attempted to include under represented groups, such as blacks, have left room to be criticized in the way they have gone about this task (Whatley, 1988).

Finally, although these studies were concerned with issues of gender and sex-equity, most authors failed to define these terms. Thus, it is not always clear what is being investigated.



## CHAPTER 3

### A FEMINIST/FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION FRAMEWORK

There are several different feminist theories which have contributed to the literature on family life education. Radical feminist theory suggests that patriarchy and male power are the driving forces behind women's oppression. Socialist feminists stress exploitation of women's work and believe that "equal opportunity is impossible in a class based society" (p. Osmond and Thorne, 1993, p. 595) while liberal feminists have sought "to challenge sex stereotyping in the educational system" (Osmond and Thorne, 1993, p. 594). Each theory would provide a different view of the curriculum to be evaluated in this study.

Because this study was developed from a family life education context, emphasis will be placed on the feminist literature within family life education. In this chapter, a feminist perspective on family life education will be used to develop a framework to help guide the investigation and will also address the criticism of previous studies which have not used a framework. In order to help clarify this framework, the feminist literature on family life education will first be reviewed.

#### Feminist Perspective on Family Life Education

Beginning with the resurgence of the women's movement in the 1960's, feminists have attempted to effect change in both the work and family domains. Despite some success in these areas, feminist scholars continue to challenge conventional models of the family and outdated notions of male and female role behaviour (Bubolz and McKenry, 1993). According to Bubolz and McKenry (1993) "The primary goal of feminism is to create a society in which gender will become a far less significant basis for allocating social tasks, prestige, and power" (p. 136).

Although most feminists share this goal, feminism encompasses a variety of perspectives and thus there is no one feminist theory. However, several feminist authors have offered a feminist perspective on family life education. These feminists (e.g. Allen & Baber, 1992; Walker, 1993) have raised concerns about the content and teaching methods of FLE programs and have questioned the extent to which these programs are gender inclusive. Feminists agree that contemporary family life education requires "a new paradigm for investigation" (Allen & Baber, 1992, p. 379), where the decline of the traditional family is recognized and studying individual and family diversity becomes the priority.

As noted in Chapter 2, few studies analysing family life education materials have been conducted using a framework to guide the research. Because no framework exists, it is necessary to develop one specifically for use in this study. The feminist literature on family life education will be used to develop a framework for analysis. This literature was selected, not only because it is relevant to the central issue of gender, but also because it has raised critical questions about the content and teaching methods of FLE. There are two kinds of articles included in this review--those which address family life education programs directly and those which address feminist concerns in family studies research.

Walker and Thompson (1984) assessed the advancement of feminist ideology in family studies and outlined ten feminist principles which they believe constitute a feminist approach to family studies research:

- 1) The myth of value-free science. Feminist researchers recognize that science is often characterized by myths or misinformation and thus, research is not objective.

- 2) Recognition of the importance of the sociohistorical context. Research should recognize that the sex/gender system is socially constructed and changes over time.
- 3) Gender and position as categories of analysis. Gender influences experiences and is an important variable in understanding families.
- 4) Emphasis on intragroup heterogeneity. The diversity of people should be represented within family research. One way to achieve this is to avoid assuming that people of the same gender behave the same way.
- 5) Recognition of complexity. Feminists recognize that the social world is bidirectional rather than unidirectional. Feminists advocate for the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods in order to reflect these complexities.
- 6) Research that is useful. Research should attempt to improve the lives of women by solving problems specific to feminist research.
- 7) Emphasis on pluralism. Feminist researchers raise awareness around the white middle-class male bias which is inherent to much social science research and strive to avoid ageism, sexism, and racism.
- 8) Rejection of hierarchy in the research process. Feminists strive to be honest in the research process by recognizing the equality of all those involved.
- 9) Personal experience as data. Individual's personal experiences can provide useful insights in to the meaning of daily life.
- 10) The research agenda. Feminists examine issues which are important to women and can potentially improve their position in society and the family.

In order to determine if family research reflected the above principles, Walker and Thompson (1988) analyzed 40 articles published in the *Journal of Marriage and the Family* over the past 20 years. Their analysis indicated that only about 10% of the articles in *JMF* reflect a feminist ideology. These findings suggest that feminist scholarship has not been an important part of family studies, either in theory or in practice.

Walker, Kees Martin, and Thompson (1988) examined the extent to which 61 family life education programs, published within a 10 year period in *Family Relations*, reflected feminist values and assumptions. They identified six principles that represent a feminist approach to developing family programs including

- 1) recognition of the cultural context,
- 2) responsiveness to the vulnerable,
- 3) participation and equality,
- 4) celebration of diversity,
- 5) client's perspectives of problems and solutions prevail and,
- 6) empowerment of clients.

Of these six, the principle of celebration of diversity is most relevant to this study.

According to Walker et al. (1988), assumptions of similarity are often made about individuals who have been categorized together. For example, an FLE program which is targeted at adolescent mothers may assume that the needs of these mothers are all the same. Thus, few options may be offered within the course and within-group differences are ignored. Programs that take a feminist approach acknowledge the diversity among members of a group and offer the program with this in mind. After reviewing the 61 programs published in *Family Relations*, Walker et al. (1988) found

that few programs incorporated even some of the six feminist principles and none incorporated all six principles.

Allen (1988) provides a framework for integrating a feminist perspective into family studies courses, based on the feminist tenet that content and context are inseparable in a learning environment. She states, "The selection of course content and readings and the way in which class is conducted are political choices that reflect the biases of the teacher's beliefs, discipline, and institution" (p. 29). Her framework describes feminist teaching and also provides specific strategies for integrating feminism into the curriculum. Allen (1988) proposes that in order for teachers to adopt a feminist orientation, the values of respect for diversity and creating an atmosphere of equality in the classroom are essential. For example, teachers should "be aware of how their own classroom behaviours reinforce women students' invisibility and communicate different expectations for men and women." (Allen, 1988, p. 32). Suggested strategies for incorporating a feminist perspective into the curriculum include:

- 1) raising awareness among teachers about the positive contribution that self-disclosure, both by teachers and by students, can make to learning,
- 2) utilizing diverse assignments to foster taking responsibility for one's own ideas while learning to appreciate other points of view and,
- 3) assigning books and articles which present a variety of viewpoints.

These strategies are useful because they reinforce accepted educational values such as diversity, co-operation, interaction and equality.

According to Walker (1993) "the content of family studies courses and programs is dominated by literature reflecting white, middle-class, heterosexual couples with children" (p. 342).

She assumes that teachers of FLE are committed to helping students understand the realities of family life but recognizes that there is little available to help them facilitate inclusive teaching, and thus a realistic portrait of families is not typically provided for students. In her view, the issues which are fundamental to inclusive teaching in FLE can be derived from feminist principles. Some of the feminist principles which she views as essential include:

- 1) adopting a critical perspective toward sources of knowledge about family life,
- 2) linking individual and familial experiences to external, structural processes,
- 3) focusing on variations within groups as opposed to differences between groups,
- 4) refraining from comparing underrepresented groups to a mainstream standard and,
- 5) deconstructing families and relationships in order to see what is included as well as what is excluded from definitions, and what is assumed and what is rejected in the selection of topics and assigned readings.

The principles listed above are used by Walker (1993) to identify content and teaching strategies which are essential to inclusive teaching in family life education. With respect to content, some components which Walker feels are essential additions to the curricula are understanding the social construction of difference, nullifying stereotypes and misinformation, emphasizing within group diversity and between-group similarity, and attending to the intersection of race, gender, and class.

Of particular importance to the proposed study are the first two components. The first component, the social construction of difference, reflects the feminist principle that individual and family experiences are closely tied to other societal institutions. For example, the prevailing societal conceptions of gender have changed throughout history and have affected women's roles

in the family. The second component, nullifying stereotypes and misinformation, reflects the feminist principle of adopting a critical perspective about sources of knowledge (Walker, 1993). Families are diverse and complex, and misinformation and stereotypes about families can result when sources of knowledge, such as texts and curriculum, attempt to simplify and categorize them.

In addition to these changes in content, Walker (1993) believes that in order for FLE to be inclusive, moving away from traditional teaching strategies is necessary. Suggested changes in teaching strategies include encouraging student participation since "teachers have only a partial perspective in educating about diversity" (p. 345) while refraining from using lecture type formats which "neither empower students nor facilitate ownership of one's education" (p. 345). While encouraging students' participation is important, Walker notes that it is inappropriate to make students from oppressed minorities "cultural representatives" and expect them to speak on behalf of others in their minority group.

According to Allen and Baber (1992), the feminist approach provides "a vital framework for investigating the structure and process of contemporary family life" (p. 378). The authors view the diversity of families as a key issue in FLE in the 1990's and feel that FLE must undergo significant changes in the next decade. The purpose of their paper is to identify societal changes that will influence family life in the coming years and to discuss how FLE will respond to these changes. Critical societal changes which are discussed include:

- 1) replacing the obsolete traditional family of the 1950's with the more diverse "postmodern families" within family studies;

- 2) challenging the assumption that women's well being is based on a successful marriage and recognizing the validity of other intimate relationship constructions such as cohabitation;
- 3) an increased demand for gender equality as men continue to have access to more opportunities and rewards;
- 4) focusing on the inequities of the paid and unpaid labour force and the resulting burden placed on women and;
- 5) an escalation in conflict over women's reproductive rights as these rights are seriously challenged.

These societal changes have important implications for FLE educators. Allen and Baber (1992) state that "family life education must acknowledge and be responsive to the changing diversity of U.S. families and the implications of continued inequality based on the intersections of gender, race, class, age, and sexual orientation" (p. 382). To meet these changes, Allen and Baber (1992) suggest FLE teachers continue to re-evaluate their own philosophies about families while offering FLE programs which are practical through providing current and valid information and integrating theory and practice.

MacDermid, Jurich, Myers-Walls, and Pelo (1992) use three core assumptions of feminism to examine the contributions of the feminist perspective to various contexts of FLE. The authors feel "that the feminist perspective provides a conceptual framework for accomplishing effective family life education in a holistic approach that bridges content, methods, and participants" (p. 31). MacDermid et al. (1992) make three major claims derived from the feminist perspective. Their first claim states "that feminist perspectives enlighten what we teach... that is, feminist perspectives



help educators and learners to clarify their understanding of the subject matter: families and children" (p.32). More specifically, the feminist perspective has emphasized the importance of careful selection of materials on the part of the educator. According to MacDermid et al., "the primary goal of the selection process is the inclusion of materials which present a broad spectrum of perspectives, research methods, and backgrounds" (p. 32). By doing this educators avoid selecting materials that promote Anglo-conformity (i.e. materials which portray the white, middle-class family as the norm to which all other families are compared).

The second major claim is that "Feminist teaching methods seek to forge connections among learners, knowledge, and educators, and to facilitate their empowerment" (p. 32). Connections are forged when learners recognize the importance of and use their own experiences for growth and learning, when learners begin to understand their own biases and the biases of others in the class, and when learners feel that the educator is accessible. Learners are empowered when their own perspectives are incorporated into the design and the ongoing adjustment of the program.

The third major claim is that "teaching from a feminist perspective informs our understanding of participants more effectively" (p. 35). When a broad understanding of the participants is not reached, it is difficult to offer a course that meets the needs of all the participants. As a result, some learners (i.e. ethnic minorities) may feel ignored or inadequate. MacDermid et al. (1992) state that knowing your participants is essential and "with this knowledge we can recognize and affirm their diversity". (p. 35).

Clearly, these feminists have been strong advocates for a "new paradigm" in family life education. A new paradigm for FLE would likely be derived from feminist principles and

characterized by inclusive FLE programs; this would be reflected in both the content of the curriculum and the teaching methods used in the classroom.

### Framework for Analysis

The principles of feminist research offer significant promise for meeting the goals of inclusive teaching about gender in FLE (Walker, 1993). For this reason, feminist principles are used to develop the framework for this study. Each of the authors reviewed above have identified important feminist principles and/or guidelines for family life education practice, and of these, seven have been chosen for use in this study. These seven principles were selected because they are common throughout the literature and emerge as important principles to feminists. Further, these principles are specific to gender and/or family life education and thus provide a useful set of criteria for which to evaluate the *CAPP* curriculum. The feminist principles which emerge from the literature are:

**1) Principle: Recognizing the influence of gender on work; specifically acknowledging unequal treatment of women in the paid and unpaid work arenas.** Paid work for women is important and pervasive, yet women still face discrimination which thwart their efforts to advance in their jobs and obtain wages equal to that of their male counterparts (Allen & Baber, 1992). In addition, women work a "second shift", taking primary responsibility for housework and child care. This "second shift" often results in women having to make compromises in their paid work which men are not required to make (Allen & Baber, 1992). Thus, curriculum documents should address gender inequities within the paid and unpaid work arenas. This includes issues such as lower pay for women, less opportunities for female employment and advancement, and implications of the "second shift".

**2) Principle: Recognizing the influence of gender on roles/position in families.** The popular belief that the nuclear family is an internally cohesive unit, comprised of members who harmoniously perform tasks allocated on the basis of gender, has been successfully disputed by feminists (MacDermid et al., 1992). Assuming all family members' interests are the same ignores power differentials according to age and gender (Walker & Thompson, 1984). By dividing families by gender and age, one can begin to understand the inequity and subordinate positions inherent to many family structures. Although some feminists prefer to emphasize the similarities between the sexes, they also recognize that gender influences experience (Walker & Thompson, 1984). Thus, curriculum documents should examine family roles and how roles are often assigned on the basis of gender.

**3) Principle: Incorporating both male and female experiences into FLE.** According to Walker and Thompson, (1984), "Most social science research is biased in its emphasis on the white, middle-class, male perspective" (p. 552). This problem extends to the realm of education where feminists recognize that family life education participants are typically females who are learning in an educational system which has been based on male interests (Belenky et al., 1986). Women are outsiders in the same system they are participating in. This exemplifies how educational practices can value one group over another-- in this case males over females (MacDermid et al., 1992). While FLE curricula should attempt to validate female perspectives, male students should not be ignored. Male students are ignored when, as demonstrated by Thomas's research (1992), the content and teaching methods of FLE programs are aimed at females and do not address male needs adequately. Thus, curriculum documents should consider the interests and experiences of both gender groups.

**4) Principle: Emphasizing within group differences.** "Although feminists researchers believe that attention to gender is important, not all persons of the same gender behave similarly. The lives of individual women- and of individual men- are diverse" (Walker & Thompson, 1984, p. 551). Thus, in order to recognize diversity within gender groups, FLE curricula cannot assume similarity, even amongst males and females whom we have learned to categorize together (Walker et al., 1988). By recognizing individual differences, participants are not simplified and/or stereotyped and the needs of all participants can be met. Thus, curriculum documents should reflect both the similarities and differences between males and females.

**5) Principle: Recognizing the sociohistorical context.** Feminists recognize that "institutions, including the family and other social relationships, are reflective of the social and historical systems }of which}we are all a part (emphasis added)" (Walker & Thompson, 1984, p. 549). It should be recognized within FLE that the sex/gender system is socially constructed and changes historically. Thus, curriculum documents should address gender's social and historical ties so that a context may be provided for further learning about gender. By providing a context, students can understand how individual experiences are shaped by gender.

**6) Principle: Recognizing family diversity in North America.** The obsolete nuclear family structure should be replaced with the more diverse "postmodern" families within FLE programs (Allen & Baber, 1992). By doing this, acceptance and validity is given to the numerous types of families common in society. Thus, the curriculum documents should discuss diverse family forms such as stepfamilies and single parent families. Equal attention should be given to the roles that males and females play in families.

**7) Principle: Providing practical and relevant information.** The feminist perspective is inherently practical. According to Allen & Baber (1992), the feminist approach "integrates theory and practice, provides accurate information, and takes a critical stance toward the construction of knowledge" (p.382). FLE programs cannot be outdated in an educational system which increasingly demands that courses be relevant to students and that teachers be accountable for the usefulness and quality of their programs (Allen & Baber, 1992). For both male and female students to benefit, the information provided needs to be valid, comprehensive and practical for today's world. Thus, the curriculum should make an attempt to provide a comprehensive program with information that is relevant to male and female students.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to evaluate selected aspects of British Columbia's *CAPP* curriculum documents to determine whether they are inclusive with respect to gender. Methods of content analysis are used to identify gender topics, implicit and explicit messages about gender, and underlying assumptions and beliefs about gender in the documents. In this chapter, a brief review of the method of content analysis will be provided. This will be followed by a description of the specific procedures used in this study.

#### Method

Content analysis is defined as "any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages" (Holsti, 1968, p. 608). This method allows significant leeway for drawing inferences from the documents. According to Stone, Dunphy, Smith and Ogilvie (1966), "making inferences from communication content is the primary function of content analysis" (p. 17). The goal is not merely to describe but to integrate a conceptual framework with the method so that inferences can be made. Although the researcher has a monopoly on the interpretation of the content, the researcher is obliged to make clear the inferences being made (Stone et al., 1966). According to Harbert, Vinick, and Ekerdt (1992), content analysis is well suited to probing cultural notions or stereotypes. Thus, it is useful for examining the research problem identified for this study.

One question frequently asked about content analysis is whether quantitative or qualitative methods should be used. Quantitative techniques help researchers to examine questions such as frequencies of categories, while qualitative techniques help researchers to identify themes or

patterns that arise from the data. Arguments have been made in favour of each type of analysis, but some have suggested that a combination of both qualitative and quantitative techniques is useful (Smith, 1975; Abrahamson, 1983).

There is also a difference of opinion regarding whether content analysis should be limited to manifest content or extended to include latent content (Berg, 1995). Manifest content includes "those elements that are physically present and countable", whereas latent content is "an interpretive reading of the symbolism underlying the physically presented data" (Berg, 1995, p. 176). As with qualitative vs. quantitative analysis, a number of authors have suggested that it is preferable to use both manifest and latent content analysis strategies whenever possible.

Using content analysis to assess written documents requires that the researcher determine the sampling strategy and the level of sampling. According to Berg (1995) "many conventional sampling procedures used in other data-collection techniques may be used in content analysis", (p. 178) including random sampling, systematic sampling, and purposive sampling. Levels of sampling can include words, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, or other elements present in the documents. The sampling strategy and the level of sampling selected is influenced by the nature of the documents being analyzed and the research questions being asked.

An important step in conducting a content analysis is to determine the unit of analysis or "what to count". It is generally accepted that there are seven major elements in written messages that can be counted (Berg, 1995): words or terms, themes, characters, paragraphs, items, concepts, and semantics. Once the content elements or characteristics are specified, rules are applied to identify and record the characteristics. The characteristics are then coded into categories. Categories are determined by the researcher based on the type of documents being examined and

the research problem being investigated. The categories "should be consistent not only with the questions asked and the methodological requirements of science but also with relation to the properties of the phenomena under investigation" (Berg, 1995, p. 184).

One limitation of content analysis is that it is confined to what is contained in the document. Thus, the researcher is limited to examining only those messages which have been previously recorded. For this reason, the researcher may experience difficulty in locating messages relevant to the research questions being asked. Similarly, one cannot expect that the content is written from the same perspective as the framework being applied, and therefore the content may constrain the application of the framework.

Content analysis also has several strengths. It is an unobtrusive method that can be carried out at low cost. It can also be used to examine many types of documents. These may include books, historical documents, or educational materials.

Further, the reliability of the data and the validity of the results can be promoted through "careful attention to data extraction and categorization of criteria" (Harbert et al., 1992, p. 265). More specifically, the reliability of the study is fostered when the rules applied in selecting the data to be recorded are clearly stipulated. The validity of the findings is affected by the categorization of the data and is fostered when a high priority is placed on consistency in the categorization process. Someone other than the reviewer can be of assistance in this regard by re-evaluating the placement of the content in the categories.



### Procedure

Four *CAPP* documents were analyzed for this study (Province of British Columbia, 1995a, 1995c, 1995d). Before explaining the procedure followed in the analysis, these documents will be briefly described.

### The Documents

The *Career and Personal Planning 8-12 (CAPP)* curriculum was designed to address both the personal planning and work initiatives that have been outlined by the Ministry of Education in British Columbia. The curriculum consists of four resource guides written for teachers: an *Integrated Resource Package*, *Suggested Classroom Activities*, *Selected Strategies for Instruction*, and *Organizing for Instruction*.

The *Integrated Resource Package (IRP)* (Province of British Columbia, 1995a) is the main resource guide for teachers and contains an introduction to *CAPP*, the curriculum itself, and appendices which summarize learning outcomes and learning resources. Twelve learning components, grouped under three broad organizers-- The Planning Process, Personal Development, and Career Development-- make up the curriculum. Table 1 provides an outline of the curriculum presented in the IRP, listing each of the twelve learning components under their respective headings. Each of the twelve components includes four sections: Prescribed Learning Outcomes, Suggested Instructional Strategies, Suggested Assessment Strategies, and Recommended Learning Resources. As well, each component is developed for four different grade levels: grade 8, grade 9, grade 10, and grade 11/12.

The first section of each component, Prescribed Learning Outcomes, articulates the requirements of the component at that grade level. For example, in grade 10, one of the Career Exploration learning outcomes states

“It is expected that students will identify the factors that affect the availability of career opportunities” (p. 84).

**Table 1**

**Career and Personal Planning Curriculum Outline.**

<b>The Planning Process</b>	<b>Personal Development</b>	<b>Career Development</b>
<b>1) Collecting information.</b>	<b>4) Healthy living.</b>	<b>10) Career awareness.</b>
<b>2) Making plans and decisions.</b>	<b>5) Mental well-being.</b>	<b>11) Career exploration.</b>
<b>3) Implementing and monitoring.</b>	<b>6) Family life education.</b>	<b>12) Career preparation.</b>
	<b>7) Child abuse prevention.</b>	
	<b>8) Substance-abuse prevention.</b>	
	<b>9) Safety and injury prevention.</b>	

The second section of each component, Suggested Instructional Strategies, provides a variety of classroom activities, homework assignments, and/or field trips, as a means for students to achieve the learning outcomes of that component. For example, to achieve the learning outcome quoted above, one instructional strategy suggests that teachers,

“Have small groups of students explore factors that might influence the availability of career opportunities. Have them consider such issues as gender and racial stereotyping, educational and training requirements, career areas that appear to be declining, as well as potential career opportunities in the future” (p. 84).

The third section of each component is labeled Suggested Assessment Strategies, and provides teachers with ideas on how to rate students’ performance. To assess students’ performance on the above instructional strategy, it is suggested that teachers “Collect evidence of students’ ability to ask questions such as: What factors have you considered when making your career choice?” (p. 85).

The fourth section of each component is labeled Recommended Learning Resources. Unlike the other three sections, this section does not contain individual statements or themes. Rather, the names of educational resources, including books, videos, games and computer software, are provided. These resources have been approved by the Ministry of Education and contain content that complements the component. More information on the recommended resources is provided in an appendix of the IRP, where short descriptions of each of the resources can be found. An example of one component from the IRP is provided in Appendix A.

Suggested Classroom Activities (Province of British Columbia, 1995d) is the second document and was designed to build on the Integrated Resource Package (IRP). In the introduction to this documents, it states that,

“Where the *IRP* is a functional overview document that provides general suggestions with respect to instructional activities and strategies, this resource is a comprehensively detailed, day-to-day operational document that provides specific instructional planning suggestions, complete with procedural steps, pre-planning needs, suggested time allocations, cautions for dealing with sensitive topics, and student handout master that can be replicated for distribution” (p. 5).

This document is an 800 page collection of approximately 200 instructional activities and is designed to support the entire curriculum by endeavouring “to address all the learning outcomes and every grade level, 8-12” (p. 5). An example of an activity from this document is provided in Appendix B.

*Selected Strategies for Instruction* (Province of British Columbia, 1995c) is a *CAPP* resource guide which “is designed to assist teachers in augmenting their repertoire of strategies to meet the individual needs of students in CAPP 8-12” (p. 4). More specifically, there are four goals of this resource guide outlined at the beginning of the text which state:

- “This resource is meant to provide:
- practical ideas for teachers as they begin implementation of the K-12 Educational Plan for the Intermediate and Graduation years, Grades 8-12.
- examples and models of current practice that support Ministry directions
- concrete examples of policy-into-practice
- a focus on students, and strategies that meet their diverse needs” (p. 4)”.

This document is comprised of two sections. First, overviews and examples of sixteen different instructional strategies are provided to assist teachers in their instruction. Second, five appendices are provided which highlight important issues to consider when teaching a diverse student population. Gender equity is emphasized as one of the important issues and is discussed in the appendix entitled *Gender Equitable Instruction*. This is reproduced in its entirety in Appendix C.

The resource guide, *Organizing for Instruction* (Province of British Columbia, 1995b), deals primarily with planning considerations and sources of information for teachers and was designed to help educators deal with the challenges of implementing the *CAPP* curriculum. The

content found in this document does not relate to the research questions being asked in this study, and therefore will not be included in the analysis.

### Sampling Strategy

A purposive sampling strategy was used to select the elements of the documents to be examined in this study. This strategy allows the researcher to use her special knowledge or expertise to select the sample.

Using this strategy, three components of the *IRP* were selected for analysis: a) Family Life Education, b) Career Awareness, and c) Career Exploration. Based on an initial reading of the *IRP*, these three components were found to contain content most relevant to the research questions being asked. The overriding goal of the first component, Family Life Education, is “to develop students' understanding of the role of the family and a capacity for responsible decision-making in their personal relationships” (p. 6). The goal of the second component, Career Awareness, is “to develop students' understanding and appreciation of personal characteristics and how these relate to potential careers” (p. 7). The goal of the third component, Career Exploration, is “to help students to take advantage of community resources in order to relate their learning and skills to education, career, and personal roles in a changing world” (p. 7).

In addition to these three components, Appendix B of the *IRP* was also included in the sample. This appendix, entitled *Learning Resources*, contains names and a short description of each of the resources recommended for use in conjunction with the *IRP* components. Thus, those resources recommended for use with the three selected components were also included as part of the *IRP* analysis.

In the *Selected Classroom Activities* document, classroom activities have been designed to correspond with specific components of the *IRP*. Therefore, those activities which correspond to the three learning components discussed above (Family Life Education, Career Awareness, and Career Exploration) were selected for analysis.

The *Selected Strategies for Instruction* document was found to have only one relevant section, an appendix entitled *Gender Equitable Instruction*. All of the content in this appendix was analyzed and used for purposes of comparison.

#### Content Identification and Categorization

Based on Berg (1995), the process of identifying and categorizing the content was carried out in three distinct steps. First, relevant content within the selected documents was identified. Initially it was thought that selecting content related to the three broad concepts of gender, work, and family would be the most reliable method of identifying all content relevant to this study. To test this method of selection, a preliminary analysis was conducted. Three people were asked to examine selected aspects of the curriculum to identify all content relevant to gender, work, and family. Because it was determined that almost all of the content was perceived as relevant to these concepts, all content from the selected aspects of *CAPP* was recorded.

A combination of themes and items was employed as the content unit of analysis. Berg (1995) defines a theme as a "simple sentence, a string of words with a subject and a predicate" (p.181) and an item as "the whole unit of the sender's message" (p. 182). Theme was used as the content unit of analysis to record data from the *IRP* and *Selected Strategies for Instruction* documents. This unit of analysis was selected because individual statements were easily identified and recorded. In contrast, item was used as the content unit of analysis for the *Suggested*

*Classroom Activities* document. Rather than recording individual statements from each of the activities, it proved more useful to examine an activity in its entirety.

All the themes or items contained in the selected sections were recorded verbatim on recording sheets. It was necessary to develop three different recording sheets to encompass the content from the documents examined. Two separate recording sheets were developed for the *IRP* document and one for the *Suggested Classroom Activities* document. An example of each of the three recording sheets is provided in Appendix D.

Besides the data itself, each of the recording sheets also contains a section entitled *Criteria for Evaluation*. This section evaluates each theme and item according to three feminist criteria: stereotyping, context, and diversity. The criteria were selected because they were consistently discussed within the literature as key issues in developing inclusive curricula. Stereotyping was evaluated by asking two questions: "Does the theme or item reflect a preconceived notion about individuals within a given group?" and, "Does the theme or item recognize or acknowledge stereotypical views within society?". Context was evaluated by asking, "When gender is discussed in a theme or item, is the concept of gender being presented as a socially constructed notion which changes historically?". The third criteria, diversity, was evaluated by asking, "Does the theme or item acknowledge differences within or between groups?". The data was evaluated for a range of diversity issues including gender, ethnicity, age, and diverse family forms. When items from the *Suggested Classroom Activities* documents were evaluated, an additional criteria was considered, the relevance of the activity to the learning outcome(s) for which it was intended. This criteria was considered for this document and not the others, because only the material contained in this

document is relevant to this evaluation. The results of the evaluation for each theme or item was included on the data recording sheets.

After the relevant content had been recorded and evaluated, the third step was to place the content into mutually exclusive categories. Initially only three categories were selected with the intention of reflecting the chosen concepts of gender, work, and family. However, because it was decided that all content should be recorded, an additional category of *Other* was included. Further, because some material reflects more than one concept, such as gender and work or work and family, additional categories were needed. As a result, ten categories were identified: Gender, Gender and Work, Gender and Family, Gender and Other, Work, Work and Family, Work and Other, Family, Family and Other, and Other.

### Analysis

Due to the diverse nature of the material included in the documents, the analytic process for each of the documents varies. For this reason, procedures for analysis of each of the documents are presented separately. These procedures will be presented in the same order as the descriptions of the documents.

#### Analysis of the Integrated Resource Package

Content from the *IRP* was analyzed in five different ways. First, the number of themes placed into each category were counted and sub-topics within these categories were identified. This allowed the range of statements within each category to emerge and for common themes and implicit and explicit messages about gender to be identified.



Second, the categories were examined by both grade level and component. The purpose of this analysis was to determine whether any concepts (gender, work, family, or a combination of these) were given greater emphasis at one grade level or within one component.

The third analysis of the *IRP* focused on evaluating the data. The "Criteria for Evaluation" section on each of the data recording sheets was re-examined to determine the number of themes reflecting stereotyping, context and/or diversity. This allowed for a concrete assessment of the number of themes to meet the feminist criteria.

Fourth, the interrelationship among sections of the *IRP* was examined. Comparisons were made between three different sections of the curriculum (Prescribed Learning Outcomes, Suggested Instructional Strategies, and Suggested Assessment Strategies) in order to determine the interrelationship between these sections.

The fifth and final step in the analysis was to examine the descriptions of the learning resources provided in appendix B of the *IRP*. Resources were categorized according to component (i.e. all those resources recommended for the Family Life Education component were grouped together) and resource sub-topics were identified. The sub-topics were then compared to the content included in the related component (i.e. Family Life Education resources were compared to the content covered in the Family Life Education component).

#### Analysis of the Suggested Classroom Activities

Four different analyses were conducted on the *Suggested Classroom Activities* document. Like the *IRP*, the first step in analyzing this document was to count the number of items within each of the 10 categories. For categories with a large number of items, sub-topics were identified. Categories were then analyzed by grade level and by component. Third, the items were evaluated

according to three feminist criteria- stereotyping, context, diversity. In addition, a fourth criteria, relevance, was used to evaluate the activity's connection to the learning outcome(s) for which they are designed to fulfil. This evaluation indicated the number of items to meet one or more of the evaluation criteria. The fourth and final step in the analysis procedure was to compare the instructional strategies utilized in the activities to the instructional strategies discussed in the appendix on *Gender Equitable Instruction*. As mentioned previously, this appendix is found in the document entitled *Selected Strategies for Instruction*.

### Reliability and Validity

Since the reliability of this study can be promoted through careful attention to data extraction, three people were asked to read selected parts of the curriculum and highlight the material which they identified as either explicitly or implicitly related to the concepts of gender, work, and family. This helped to insure that the content selected was relevant to the concepts being examined. To foster the validity of this study an individual, familiar with the research questions being asked, was asked to review a random selection of items and themes placed into each of the categories to ensure consistency in the categorization process. Although no specific inter-rater reliability index was calculated, the reviewer agreed with the decision of the researcher in nearly every case. Further, the content was reviewed several times by the researcher to ensure appropriate categories and sub-topics were identified for the content.

### Glossary of Terms

Due to the complexity of the content analysis method and in light of the many different *CAPP* documents being examined in this study, a glossary of terms is provided. This glossary

includes words or expressions associated with both the methodology of this study and the *CAPP* documents analyzed.

#### Terms Used in the Methodology

1. Theme-- the unit of analysis for recording each piece of data in the *CAPP Integrated Resource Package* document.
2. Item/Activity-- the unit of analysis for recording each piece of data in the *CAPP Suggested Classroom Activities* document.
3. Category--a broad classification under which themes or items are grouped together.
4. Sub--topic- specific subject-matter within a given category, with which themes or items can be associated with.
5. Concept-- a major idea under investigation in the study (i.e. gender, work, and family).

#### Terms Used to Describe the Documents

1. *IRP*-- the main *CAPP* curriculum document; an abbreviation of *Integrated Resource Package*.
2. *Suggested Classroom Activities*-- a document containing over 200 activities designed to support the content in the *IRP*.
3. Component-- one of twelve major topic areas in the *CAPP* curriculum, three of which are under investigation here (Family Life Education, Career Awareness, and Career Exploration).
4. Section-- a sub-set of each component in the *IRP*. Four sections (Prescribed Learning Outcomes, Suggested Instructional Strategies, Suggested Assessment Strategies, and Recommended Learning Resources) make-up each component.
5. Resources- - those educational materials recommended for use with one or more of the *IRP* components.

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS

In this chapter, the findings of the analysis of the selected *CAPP* documents will be presented. Because of the diversity in these documents, the findings will be presented in two sections. The first section will report the findings of the analysis of the *Integrated Resource Package 8-12 (IRP)*, while the second section will report the findings of the analysis of the *Suggested Classroom Activities* and the *Selected Strategies For Instruction*.

#### Integrated Resource Package

As noted in Chapter Four, five different analyses of this document were conducted. The findings of each analysis will be presented separately.

#### Analysis by Categories

The purpose of this analysis was to determine the number of themes in each of the ten categories and to identify sub-topics within these categories. A capital letter will be used to indicate the first letter of each category (i.e. Gender, Gender and Work) while concepts will be denoted by using only lower case letters (i.e. gender, work, and family).

As stated in Chapter 4, “theme” was used as the content unit of analysis to record data from this document. A total of 249 themes were recorded from the three selected components and were placed into one of ten mutually exclusive categories. These categories were derived from the three major concepts of the study (gender, work, and family), and were used either singly (the theme refers exclusively to one of the three concepts) or in combination (e.g., Gender and Work, Gender and Family, Family and Work). For themes which did not fit in to one of these six categories, four additional categories were created. The word “Other” was used singly for themes unrelated to the

concepts of gender, work, and family, and Other in combination with one of the major concepts (Gender and Other, Work and Other, and Family and Other) was also used where appropriate.

In order to facilitate the interpretation of the *IRP*, results of this analysis will be presented according to the three major concepts of the study (gender, work, and family) plus Other. It should be noted that, although each theme appears in only one of the ten categories, it is necessary to report findings in the combined categories under each concept for which it is relevant. For example, themes in the combined category of Gender and Work will be included in the analysis of gender and in the analysis of work. This is necessary to provide a comprehensive analysis of each of these concepts. A total of 12 themes were found in these combined categories, eight in gender and work, two in gender and family, and 2 in work and family. As a consequence, the overall percentage reported for gender, work, family, and other will total slightly more than 100%.

Gender. Only 12 themes were identified in the categories of Gender, Gender and Work, Gender and Family, and Gender and Other. This represents approximately 5% of themes recorded from the *IRP*. These themes were found in three sections of the selected components and, therefore, reflect three different kinds of statements: 1) Learning Outcomes, 2) Instructional Strategies, and 3) Assessment Strategies. An overview of the analysis for the concept of gender, including the number of themes in each category and the sub-topics for each category, is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Gender Categories

Category	Number of Themes in Category	Category Sub-Topics
Gender and Work	8	a) Gender and changing work patterns (5 themes).  b) Gender's effect on job availability (3 themes).
Gender and Family	2	a) Family roles and responsibilities (2 themes).
Gender	1	a) Media depictions (1 theme).
Gender and Other	1	a) Stereotyping (1 theme).

As reported in Table 2, most of the themes for the concept of gender emphasized Gender and Work. Further analysis of these themes identified two sub-topics within this category. Five of these themes addressed the sub-topic of "gender and changing work patterns" including Learning Outcomes such as,

"It is expected that students will identify factors that influence the changing career patterns of women and men" (p. 60),

and Suggested Instructional Strategies such as,

"Invite community members from a variety of cultures to participate in a forum that focuses on non-traditional jobs for both men and women" (p. 82),

and,

"Have students present case studies of women and men who have entered careers that have been traditionally associated with the other gender. Have students brainstorm positive reasons for entering these occupations" (p. 60).

The remaining themes focused on "gender's effect on job availability", and include Suggested Instructional Strategies such as,

"Have students debate why men and women might restrict their range of occupational choices unnecessarily" (p. 60),

and a Suggested Assessment Strategy to evaluate students' ability to,

"Ask questions such as: What factors affect the selection of careers? Do these factors differ by gender? If so, why?" (p. 61).

Both themes in the Gender and Family category addressed "family roles and responsibilities",

"It is expected that students will identify stereotypical views of gender roles and responsibilities that exist within a family" (p. 26),

and,

"Have students write down the responsibilities of each member of their families. Then have them graph the jobs (e.g. housework) done by each member. Have students compare the results, focusing on gender and age

differences, and discuss how the family decides who gets which responsibilities" (p. 74).

The remaining themes, one each in Gender and Gender and Other, were concerned with "media depictions" and "stereotyping",

"Have students look at media advertisements and discuss the ways in which men, women, and children are depicted" (p. 50),

and,

"Collect evidence of students ability to critically evaluate examples of stereotyping in society and in the media" (p. 51).

Work. The greatest amount of attention in the *IRP* was given to the concept of work, with 119 of the 249 themes (47%) found in the categories of Work, Gender and Work, Work and Family, and Work and Other. As with gender, themes were found in each of three sections-- Prescribed Learning Outcomes, Suggested Instructional Strategies, and Suggested Assessment Strategies. Table 3 summarizes the Work categories, including the number of themes and sub-topics for each category.



Table 3

Work Categories

Category	Number of Themes in Category	Category Sub-topics
Work	88	a) Personal career goals and and interests (44 themes).  b) The nature of work (22 themes).  c) Understanding career opportunities (22 themes).
Work and Other	21	a) Obtaining goals (11 themes).  b) A changing world (4 themes).  c) Personal Characteristics (4 themes).  d) Factors which affect success (1 theme).  e) Media Images (1 theme).
Gender and Work	8	a) Gender and changing work patterns (5 themes).  b) Gender's effect on job availability and selection (3 themes).
Work and Family	2	a) Family work patterns and expectations (2 themes).

Nearly three quarters of the themes on work (88) were in the category of Work. Further review of this category identified three different sub-topics. Half of the themes (44) addressed “personal career interests and goals”, including Suggested Instructional Strategies such as,

“Have students imagine themselves in ten years in the ideal occupation. Then have them write or draw a picture illustrating this ideal situation” (p. 58),

and,

“Have students develop various media to represent career areas that are of interest to them and the educational and training requirements of each” (p. 108).

One quarter of the themes (22) focused on “the nature of work” including Learning Outcomes such as,

“It is expected that students will assess and evaluate the contributions of various types of work” (p. 108).

The remaining quarter of the themes (22) focused on “understanding career opportunities”. One Suggested Assessment Strategies recommends that teachers,

“Collect evidence of students’ ability to research career opportunities both locally and globally” (p. 83).

The next largest category, Work and Other, included 21 themes. This category was diverse, with five sub-topics identified. The largest of these sub-topics, “meeting goals”, included themes such as,

“Look for evidence of students ability to select the appropriate services and resources needed to meet their education, career, and personal goals as set out in their Student Learning Plans” (p. 85).

The sub-topics of “a changing world” and “personal characteristics” each had four themes. The first relating to themes such as,

“Collect evidence of students’ ability to predict the impact of change on the economy, society, the environment, and the job market” (p. 85),

and the latter to,

“develop student’s understanding and appreciation of personal characteristics and how these relate to potential careers” (p. 34).

The remaining two sub-topics, “media images” and “factors which affect success”, were each represented by a single theme.

As reported previously in the analysis of the concept of gender, there were eight themes in the Gender and Work category, with two sub-topics, “gender and changing work patterns” and “gender’s effect on job availability”. Examples of these themes include (respectively),

“Have the whole class explore recent changes to the workplace, with particular emphasis on the changing career patterns of men and women” (p. 60).

and,

“Have small groups of students explore factors that might influence the availability of career opportunities. Have them consider such issues as gender and racial stereotypes, education and training requirements, career areas that appear to be declining as well as potential career opportunities in the future” (p. 84).

The final two themes, in the Work and Family category, both addressed “family work patterns and expectations”. For example, one Learning Outcomes, states,

“It is expected that students will relate career choices to family expectations” (p. 36).

Family. Forty-two themes (17%) were recorded in the categories of Family, Gender and Family, Work and Family, and Family and Other. Again, these themes were found in all three sections of the components (Prescribed Learning Outcomes, Suggested Instructional Strategies, and Suggested Assessment Strategies). A review of the Family categories and sub-topics is provided in Table 4.

Table 4

Family Categories

Category	Number of Themes in Category	Category Sub-topics
Family	33	a) Family roles and responsibilities (15 themes).  b) Family expectations and relationships (11 themes).  c) Family values and traditions (6 themes).  d) Families as portrayed in the media (1 theme).
Family and Other	5	a) Role of the family and ability to make responsible decisions (4 themes).  b) Influences of TV on behaviour in the family (1 theme).
Work and Family	2	a) Family work patterns and expectations (2 themes).
Gender and Family	2	a) Gender and family roles and responsibilities (2 themes).

Most of the themes (33, or 79%) were in the Family category. Fifteen address the sub-topic of “family roles and responsibilities” in a variety of ways, including identifying roles and responsibilities, changing roles and responsibilities, and cultural differences in roles and responsibilities. Themes representative of these include (respectively),

“It is expected that students will identify a variety of roles and responsibilities that exist within a family” (p. 50),

“Have students record the responsibilities of each person in their families and post these on a classroom wall. Then have them predict how these roles may change over time” (p. 74).

and,

“Have students compare their families’ roles and responsibilities with those of families from other cultures” (p. 74).

There were 11 themes (26%) in the sub-topic of “family expectations and relationships” including instructional strategies such as,

“Have students involve their parents in an exploration of family expectations. Have them compare their expectations for themselves and their parents with their parents’ expectations for themselves and their child” (p. 74),

and assessment strategies such as,

“Look for evidence of students’ ability to describe the different expectations of family members (e.g., in terms of moral or behavioural standards)” (p. 75).

Of the remaining seven themes in the Family category, six focus on “family values and traditions”,

“Have students share and discuss their own families values and traditions” (p. 26),

and one pertains to “families as portrayed in the media”,

“Have students compare models of the family from different cultures as portrayed in the news media, in film and in literature” (p. 51).

There were five themes in the Family and Other category, focused on the sub-topics of “the role of the family and one’s ability to make responsible decisions” and “the influence of TV on behaviour in the family”.

As noted previously, two themes in the category of Work and Family addressed the topic of “family work patterns and expectations” such as,

“Have students create a “family tree of occupations”, illustrating the career paths that family members have taken. Can they find any patterns? Do these patterns (if they exist) affect students’ career aspirations? (p. 36).

There were also two themes in the category of Gender and Family, both addressing “family roles and responsibilities”,

“It is expected that students will identify stereotypical views of gender roles and responsibilities that exist within a family” (p. 26).

Other. As noted earlier, the category Other was created for themes that do not directly relate to the major concepts of this study (gender, work, and family). This permitted the inclusion of all content in the three selected *IRP* components in the analysis. Eighty-eight themes (35% of the total recorded statements) were found in this category. These included themes pertaining to “life skills” (29 themes), “personal attributes, interests and goals” (23 themes), “sexuality/adolescent changes” (19 themes), “role models and mentors” (12 themes), “media” (3 themes), and “the economy” (1 theme). Because these themes do not relate directly to the purpose of this study, no further analysis of this category will be provided. However, it should be noted that, although these themes were not relevant to the purposes of this study, they were relevant to the “personal planning” focus of the *Career and Personal Planning* curriculum.

### Categories by Grade Level and by Component

The second analysis of the *IRP* examined the categories by grade level and by component. The purpose of this analysis is to determine if the major concepts of the study (gender, work, and family) are more prevalent at one grade level or in one component of the curriculum.

Categories by Grade Level. One important question to be asked about the data is whether there are differences in the categories depending on the grade level. Table 5 reports the number of themes in each grade level by category.

**Table 5**

### Categories by Grade Level: Themes

<u>Themes in Each Grade Level</u>					
Categories	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11/12	Total
Gender		1			1
Gender and Work		6	2		8
Gender and Family	1		1		2
Gender and Other		1			1
Work	15	21	24	28	88
Work and Family	2				2
Work and Other	3	5	7	6	21
Family	10	7	10	6	33
Family and Other	1	1	2	1	5
Other	31	25	16	16	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>249</b>

As data in the Table indicates, there is little difference in the total number of themes in each of the four grades, although there are slightly fewer themes in grade 11/12. However, some differences were apparent in the concepts emphasized at each grade level. Eight of the twelve gender-related themes were found in the grade 9 document, while there was only one gender-related

theme in grade 8 and none in grade 11/12. Work-related themes received similar attention in grades 9, 10, and 11/12 (31, 33, and 34 respectively), although there were some differences in which of the four work categories was emphasized. Fewer (20) work-related themes were found in grade 8. Family-related themes were most likely to be found in grade 8 and grade 10 (13 and 14 themes respectively), with the least in grade 11/12 (7 themes). The greatest number of Other themes (31) was found in grade 8, followed by grade 9 (25 themes). Thus, according to this analysis, there are differences in the emphasis placed on the concepts in the *IRP* depending on grade level.

Categories by Component. The purpose of this analysis was to determine whether concepts received greater emphasis in one component than in the others. Table 6 summarizes this analysis.

As this Table shows, there are slightly more themes in the Career Exploration component, although the differences are not great (34%, 30%, and 37% respectively). The concept of gender is represented in all components, with the greatest emphasis in Career Exploration (7 themes), and Family Life Education (4 themes). Only one gender-related theme was found in the Career Awareness component. Work-related themes appear in only two components, Career Exploration (70 themes) and Career Awareness (48 themes). Similarly, family-related themes appear in only two components, with the great majority in Family Life Education (40 themes), and only two in Career Exploration. The greatest number of themes in the Other category are also in Family Life Education, with 42 themes. As with grade level, this analysis indicates that the concepts do vary by component of the curriculum.



Table 6

Categories by Component: Themes

Categories	<u>Themes in Each Components</u>			
	Family Life Education	Career Awareness	Career Exploration	Total Themes
Gender	1			1
Gender and Work		1	7	8
Gender and Family	2			2
Gender and Other	1			1
Work		39	49	88
Work and Family			2	2
Work and Other		8	13	21
Family	33			33
Family and Other	5			5
Other	42	26	20	88
<b>Total Themes</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>249</b>

Evaluation Using Selected Feminist Criteria

The themes recorded from the three components of the *IRP* were evaluated according to three feminist criteria: stereotyping, context, and diversity. As noted in the review of literature, these were selected based on the feminist literature regarding family life education which emphasizes the importance of these criteria for developing inclusive curricula.

Themes were evaluated for stereotyping by asking two questions. The first question, "Does the theme reflect a preconceived notion about individuals within a given group?", is used to identify specific examples of stereotyping within the documents analyzed. None of the themes recorded from the *IRP* were found to contain examples of stereotypes. One strategy which was apparently used in the curriculum to avoid stereotypes was to use gender neutral language. General terms such

as “students” or “them” are commonly used rather than gender specific terms such as “males and females” or “he and she”. Thus, males and females are not differentiated and stereotypes may be avoided.

The second question, “Does the theme recognize or acknowledge stereotypical views within society?”, is used to determine if the documents acknowledge the possibility of stereotyping. Four of the themes acknowledged stereotyping, either gender stereotyping, racial stereotyping, or both. For example, one theme from the grade 10 Career Exploration component asks groups of students to,

“explore factors that might influence the availability of career opportunities”

and goes on to suggest,

“consider such issues as gender and racial stereotypes” (p. 84).

The above statement acknowledges stereotyping explicitly, one theme acknowledges stereotyping implicitly:

“Have students present case studies of women and men who have entered careers that have been traditionally associated with the other gender. Have students brainstorm positive reasons for entering these occupations” (p. 60).

To evaluate sociohistorical context the question, “When gender is the focus of an item, is the concept of gender being presented as a socially constructed notion which changes historically?” was used. Of the 12 gender focused themes, only two were presented in a sociohistorical context:

“Have the whole class explore recent changes to the workplace, with particular emphasis on the changing career patterns of men and women” (p. 60).

The remaining themes were acontextual such as,

“Have students write down the responsibilities of each member of their families. Then have them graph the jobs (e.g. housework) done by each member. Have students compare the results, focusing on gender and age

differences, and discuss how the family decides who gets which responsibilities" (p. 74).

Finally, themes were evaluated for diversity, that is, whether they acknowledge differences both within and between groups, including differences in gender, ethnicity, age, and diverse family forms. Fourteen of the themes acknowledge diversity issues. In the grade 10 Family Life Education component, students are asked to,

"investigate families from various cultural and ethnic groups and compare roles and responsibilities of different family members with their own experiences" (p. 74).

Other examples of attention to diversity include:

"Invite community members from a variety of cultures to participate in a forum that focuses on non-traditional jobs for both men and women" (p. 82),

and,

"Have students compare their families' roles and responsibilities with those of families from other cultures" (p. 74).

According to this analysis, only 19 of 249 themes, or approximately 8%, met at least one of the feminist criteria by acknowledging stereotyping, by placing gender in a sociohistorical context, or by focusing on issues of diversity.

#### Interrelationships Within the IRP

The purpose of the fourth analysis was to examine interrelationships among three sections of the *IRP*: the Prescribed Learning Outcomes, the Suggested Instructional Strategies, and the Suggested Assessment Strategies. It might be expected that each Learning Outcome would be supported by one or more of the Instructional Strategies, and similarly, that each Instructional Strategy would be supported by one or more of the Assessment Strategies. Although this analysis was not included in the original research design, the importance of examining these linkages

become apparent as the analysis proceeded. It is not unusual for this kind of modification in procedure to be made in this type of research.

Themes from the three sections in each component (Family Life Education, Career Awareness, and Career Exploration) were compared to determine the extent of the interrelationship among Learning Outcomes, Instructional Strategies, and Assessment Strategies. The results of this analysis are presented by component.

Family Life Education. Nineteen Learning Outcomes are prescribed for the Family Life Education Component in grade 8 through grade 11/12. In grade 8, three out of six Learning Outcomes did not have any related Instructional Strategies. These outcomes were:

“It is expected that students will identify stereotypical views of gender roles and responsibilities that exist within a family” (p. 26),

“It is expected that students will identify a variety of factors that influence family relationships” (p. 26),

and,

“It is expected that students will evaluate the impact of peer, media, and social trends on decision making in their personal relationships” (p. 26).

Appendix E illustrates the interrelationship analysis carried out on the grade 8 Family Life Education Learning Outcomes. Those Learning Outcomes without a line connecting them to an Instructional Strategy are the unrelated Outcomes identified above.

In grade 9, one of the six Learning Outcomes did not have a related Instructional Strategy:

“It is expected that students will identify the components needed to build and maintain healthy relationships” (p. 50).

In grades 10 and 11/12, however, all of the Learning Outcomes prescribed for these grade levels were supported by at least one Instructional Strategy. Thus, of the 19 Learning Outcomes

prescribed at all grade levels for Family Life Education, four (21%) did not have a corresponding Instructional Strategy.

A comparison was also made between the Family Life Education Suggested Instructional Strategies and the Suggested Assessment Strategies. As with the Learning Outcomes, it was expected that each Instructional Strategy would have one or more Assessment Strategies to support it.

When grade 8 was examined, it was found that of eight Suggested Instructional Strategies, one was unsupported by the Assessment Strategies prescribed for the same grade level. This Instructional Strategy is,

“Have students create individual timelines, indicating the important events and changes in their lives. Then have them predict the changes that they expect to occur in the future. Have them differentiate between those changes that they have control over and those over which they have little or no control” (p. 26).

This analysis is also illustrated in Appendix E.

Similarly, when grade 9 was examined it was found that two of the eleven Instructional Strategies did not have a corresponding Assessment Strategy:

“Have students use narratives or videos to discuss adolescence as a stage in which individuals gradually assume more responsibility and independence” (p. 50),

and,

“Have small groups of students discuss the concept of “peer influence” and create situation cards that identify incidents of in which peer pressure can influence decisions” (p. 50).

In contrast , all of the Instructional Strategies prescribed for grades 10 and 11/12 were supported by at least one Assessment Strategy. Thus, of the 34 Instructional Strategies in the

Family Life Education component, three (11%) did not have a relationship to the Instructional Strategies.

Career Awareness. There are 17 Learning Outcomes prescribed for the Career Awareness component. Of these, two (11%) were not supported by any of the Instructional Strategies. Both of these are Grade 10 Learning Outcomes which state that students are expected to,

“review and revise their attributes, accomplishments, interests, and skills in their Student Learning Plans” (p. 82),

and,

“review their transferable skills and relate them to occupational and lifestyle choices” (p. 82).

When the Career Awareness Suggested Instructional Strategies were compared to the Assessment Strategies, fewer Instructional Strategies had related Assessment Strategies. In grade 8, three of the Instructional Strategies were not related to any of the Assessment Strategies. These are,

“Have students predict possible significant occurrences in their lives for the next five years” (p. 34),

“Have students interview employers in occupations that interest them. (They could ask: What skills do you consider important for this job?) Then have students bring this information to class and compare it with other information that they have gathered, adding it to their portfolios” (p. 34),

and,

“Have students make a class presentation on career choice” (p. 34).

In grade 9, two Instructional Strategies were unrelated. The first states,

“Have students imagine themselves in ten years in the ideal occupation. Then have them write or draw a picture illustrating this ideal situation” (p. 58).

and the second says,

“Prepare students for participation in a jobshadowing experience or in an exploratory career interview. Have them create questions they might ask

during such an interview, and conduct mock interviews using these questions” (p. 58).

Again, in grade 10, three Instructional Strategies were unrelated to the Assessment Strategies. These strategies are all related to the notion of “success”. For example, one states

“Have students write their own definitions of *success* and give examples of situations in which people have been successful (according to their definitions)” (p. 82).

In grade 11/12, the majority of the Instructional Strategies (five strategies out of eight) are not supported by the Assessment Strategies. Although eight Instructional Strategies were identified for this component, there were only three Assessment Strategies listed. In total, 13 of the 33 Career Awareness Instructional Strategies (39%) were not supported by the Assessment Strategies.

Career Exploration. Twenty-one Learning Outcomes are prescribed for this component for grades 8 through 11/12. All of these were found to have at least one relevant Instructional Strategy to support them.

In contrast, when the Instructional Strategies were compared to the Assessment Strategies, it was found that, of the 33 Suggested Instructional Strategies, eight were not supported by the Assessment Strategies. This occurred in each grade level. For example, in grade 8, one of the unsupported Instructional Strategies states,

“Have students create a family tree of occupations illustrating the career paths that family members have taken. Can they find any patterns? Do these patterns (if they exist) affect students’ own career aspirations?” (p. 36),

and in grade 11/12,

“Have students create a glossary of terms related to the world of work (e.g., work ethics, values, transferable skills)” (p. 108).

In summary, 24% of the Career Exploration Instructional Strategies were not supported by related Assessment Strategies.

It also became apparent as the themes from the *IRP* were analyzed, that many of the Prescribed Learning Outcomes were repeated at different grade levels with only minor differences in wording. The italics added to words in the following example illustrate this point. In the Family Life Education component one grade 9 Prescribed Learning Outcome expects students to,

“*identify* the components need to build and maintain healthy relationships” (p. 50),

while in grade 10 of this same component students are expected to,

“*analyse* the components needed to build and maintain healthy relationships” (p. 74),

and in grade 11/12 students are expected to,

“*evaluate* the components needed to build and maintain healthy relationships *in their adult lives*” (p. 98).

In order to assess the extent of such repetition, Learning Outcomes at each grade level were further examined to determine if the Outcomes were prescribed more than once. This analysis indicated that 25% of the Learning Outcomes across all three components were repeated, either in full or with changes in only one or two words for different grade levels.

#### Analysis of Learning Resources

In addition to the components, the *IRP* also contains the names and descriptions of numerous educational resources recommended for use with the curriculum. A short description is provided of each resource including the grade levels for which it is recommended, the curriculum components for which it has been recommended, and the year in which the resource was first



approved by the Ministry of Education. These learning resources include books, videos, games, and multimedia packages.

The descriptions of the educational resources in the *IRP* were reviewed to determine what kinds of resources were recommended for *CAPP* and to determine their relationship to the rest of the *IRP*. It was originally intended that one or more recommended resources would be examined in their entirety, but this could not be carried out for two reasons. First, several secondary school teachers who teach the *CAPP* curriculum were contacted in order to identify one or two of the most commonly used resources for use in this analysis. However, it was discovered that many of the teachers use resources that are not specifically recommended in the *CAPP* document but which they have personally found to be useful. Thus, a "commonly used" *CAPP* resource could not be identified using this procedure. As an alternative, the British Columbia Teachers Federation, which loans educational resources to teachers, was asked for current information on the borrowing patterns for *CAPP* resources. Unfortunately this type of information is not available.

Once it was determined that a small sample of resources could not be identified for analysis, it was decided that the resources recommended in *CAPP* should be analyzed using the short descriptions provided in the curriculum document. Thus, descriptions of those resources recommended for use with the three selected components (Family Life Education, Career Awareness, and Career Exploration) were examined, and results of the analysis will be presented according to the relevant component for which they were recommended.

Family Life Education. Twenty resources were recommended for use with the Family Life Education component. Using both the name of the resource and the description of the resource provided in Appendix B of the *IRP*, five sub-topics were identified. The great majority of these

resources (16 or 80%) focus on “sexuality”. These resources (books, videos, and games) deal with a range of sexuality issues, including contraception, teen parenting, sexual harassment, sexual decision making, and HIV/AIDS. The remaining four resources deal with each of the sub-topics of “families throughout the world”, “substance abuse”, “dating violence”, and “suicide”.

This emphasis in the resources on sexuality topics is not reflected in the content of the Family Life Education component. In grade 8, for example, only one of the six Learning Outcomes makes reference to sexuality, although five of the eight recommended resources deal directly with sexuality issues. The same patterns emerged for grades 9 through 11/12. Although more content at these grade levels is devoted to issues of sexuality (five out of thirteen Learning Outcomes), all but one of the resources recommended for these grade levels focuses on sexuality.

There is considerable attention in this component to family roles and family relationships (approximately 45% of the content). However, of the twenty resources recommended for use in conjunction with this component, only one, *Families: Celebration and Hope in a World of Change*, focuses on family topics. Further, although the remaining resources address “dating violence”, “substance abuse”, and “youth suicide”, there are no themes relating to these issues within the components.

Career Awareness. Thirty-six resources on five different sub-topics (“career choices”, “student self-awareness”, “job equity”, “Canadian advancements”, “the importance of math”) were recommended for use with the Career Awareness component. Seventeen of these resources (47%) addressed the topic of “career choices”. These resources include books, videos, and computer software on a variety of career choice issues, such as the career choices of women in British Columbia, youth entrepreneurs, and career decision skills. “Student self-awareness” was the focus

of fourteen (38%) resources. These are intended to help students become aware of their career preferences, personal values and beliefs, and/or aptitudes and abilities. For example, one resource “consists of decision decks of playing cards, one related to skills and one related to values. Card topics allow students to identify and categorize a variety of skills, and clarify and categorize a list of values” (p. 152). The remaining five resources were on the sub-topics of “job equity”, “Canadian advancements”, and “the importance of math”.

There was a strong link between the recommended resources on “student self-awareness” and the content of the component. At each of the grade levels, there are at least two Learning Outcomes and Instructional Strategies which focus on this sub-topic. However, despite the emphasis in the learning resources on the sub-topic of “career choices”, the Learning Outcomes for grades eight and nine of this component do not address career choices, and only a limited amount of attention is given to this topic in grade 11/12. Thus, these resources appear to be most relevant for grade 10 where two of the five Learning Outcomes and three of the seven Instructional Strategies focus on the topic of career choices.

Finally, although five resources were recommended on the sub-topics of “job equity”, “Canadian advancements”, and “the importance of math”, there were no direct references to these sub-topics in the content of the component.

Career Exploration. Thirty-four resources are recommended for the Career Exploration component. Twenty of these resources are also recommended for the Career Awareness component and thus have been included in the above analysis. However, because a resource may be relevant to a number of issues or topics and therefore can be recommended for more than one component, those resources which are relevant to the Career Exploration component are also

included here. Nine sub-topics emerged from this analysis, with considerable similarity to those identified for Career Awareness.

“Career choices” was again the focus of the largest number of resources. Of the twelve resources (35%) on this sub-topic, three focus solely on career choices for women. For example, one video is titled *A Good Job for a Woman: Engineers* and “explores a number of careers in engineering, from training and preparation to actual job duties” (p. 161). Other resources have a more general focus, such as a computer software program which allows students to “explore a vast range of occupations available in Canada” (p. 159).

The second largest sub-topic, “student self-awareness”, has 11 resources (32%). These resources, like *Career World* which emphasizes “self-exploration, occupational awareness, equity issues, and lifestyle choices” (p. 154), are designed for students to become aware of their career preferences, personal values and beliefs, and/or aptitudes and abilities. Seven other sub-topics were identified for this category, each with only one or two relevant resources. These include “the importance of math”, “mentorship/peer helping”, “ethnic minorities working in Canada”, “work environments”, “labour trends”, “teen parenting’s effect on career options”, and “a guide to post-secondary programs”.

According to this analysis, there is some correspondence between the recommended resources and the content on the sub-topic “career choices”. Each grade level devoted at least two Learning Outcomes to this topic, and grades 9, 10, and 11/12 each have five Instructional Strategies on this topic. In contrast, despite the number of resources on “student self-awareness”, this topic received little emphasis at any of the grade levels.

Of the remaining eleven resources, eight are relevant to the component. For example, the resources on “mentorship/ peer-helping” are related to the grade 8 Instructional Strategy which asks students to,

“brainstorm definitions for the term mentor”  
and,

“identify mentors in their own lives” (p. 36).

The sub-topic of “minorities working in Canada” is linked to the Instructional Strategy which asks students to,

“create an interview questionnaire to ask adults of various cultural backgrounds in the community about their job histories” (p. 36).

Resources which were found to be unrelated to the component include those on “the importance of math” and “teen parenting’s effect on career options”.

### Suggested Classroom Activities

The second section of this chapter reports the findings from the analysis of *Suggested Classroom Activities*. As noted in Chapter 4, four separate analyses of this document were conducted, and findings of each analysis will be presented separately.

### Analysis By Category

As stated in Chapter 4, “item” is used as the content unit of analysis to record data from the *Suggested Classroom Activities* document. An item is “the whole unit of the sender's message” (Berg, 1995, p. 182), and therefore each activity selected from the document is examined in its entirety.

The *Suggested Classroom Activities* document consists of approximately 200 activities (items) designed for student use. Forty-eight (approximately 25%) of the activities were relevant to

the three components of the *IRP* being examined in this study (Family Life Education, Career Awareness, and Career Exploration) and therefore were chosen for analysis. The Career Awareness and Family Life Education components each have seventeen activities, while thirteen activities were designed for the Career Exploration component. One activity was intended for both the Career Awareness and the Career Exploration components.

The relevant activities were placed into the same ten categories used for the analysis of the *IRP*: Gender, Gender and Work, Gender and Family, Gender and Other, Work, Work and Family, Work and Other, Family, Family and Other, and Other. As with the analysis of the *IRP*, results will be presented according to the three major concepts of the study (gender, work, and family) plus Other, and findings from the combined categories will be reported under each relevant concept. For example, activities in the combined category of Work and Family will be included in both the analysis of work and the analysis of family. In this way, a comprehensive analysis of each of the concepts is provided.

Gender. Although none of the activities were identified with the Gender category, there were eight for the categories of Gender and Work, Gender and Family, and Gender and Other. This represents approximately 17% of the activities analyzed in the document. In these activities, the topic of gender is presented and discussed in a variety of ways. For example, one activity designed for the Grade 10 Family Life Education component asked students to,

“Look at similarities and differences among the roles and responsibilities of males and females in different families” (p. 377).

An activity designed for the Grade 9 Career Exploration component asks students to,

“define “gender stereotypes” as the term relates to careers (e.g., attributing behaviours, abilities, interests, values, and roles to a person or group of persons on the basis of gender)” (p. 624).

The largest number of items (five) are in the Gender and Other category. For example, one Family Life Education activity suggests a “fish bowl” discussion where the male students are first asked to discuss “what girls think about sex” while the girls listen. After, the roles are reversed and the girls are asked to discuss “what boys think about sex” (p. 426). Another, Family Life Education activity asks students to discuss the concepts of gender, gender identity, gender role, and gender orientation. In addition, students are also asked to

“Discuss sexuality (who you are) versus sexual behaviour (what you do)”

and to

“Define puberty” (p. 408).

There are two activities related to Gender and Family. Gender references are explicit in the first, which asks students to,

“Look at similarities and differences among the roles and responsibilities of male and females in different families” (p. 377).

The purpose of the second activity is for

“students to recognize aggressive, passive, and assertive communication, and begin to develop assertive communication skills” (p. 388)

with the intended Learning Outcome being that students will,

“identify and practice skills necessary for communicating with family members” (p. 388).

Despite this reference to family, the procedure for the activity suggests that, through roleplay scenarios, students will practice communication between males and females in dating relationships. Thus the reference to gender is implicit rather than explicit.

The remaining activity relates to the category of Gender and Work. It is intended to help students,

“become aware of the changes taking place in our society that affect the career opportunities of men and women. Students are made aware of their own stereotypes and given an opportunity to adjust their assumptions and beliefs” (p. 624).

The procedure for the activity includes having the class,

“discuss factors that influence changing patterns of women and men”,

including factors such as,

“more equity in pay” and “changing societal norms (p. 624).

Work. Twenty-seven of the forty-eight activities (56%) were identified for the Work, Work and Family, Work and Gender, and Work and Other categories. Most activities (22) were related to the Work category, with three sub-topics (“career interests and choices”, “transferable skills”, and “the changing job market”). For example, the purpose of one activity on “career interests and choices” is for students to

“increase their awareness of how their interests relate to particular types of jobs” (p. 658).

Similarly, the purpose of another activity on the same sub-topic is for students to

“investigate the “world of work” and develop the ability to group occupations and leisure interests as they relate to personal interests” (p. 630).

Two activities were associated with the Work and Family category. One addresses the issue of “family work patterns” asking students to,

“interview family members and record any messages or responses they make about work....and any messages about the type of work you should be doing” (p. 588).

The second activity focuses on “family as part of a job search network” and asks students to complete a worksheet entitled *Career Contacts and Your Network*, which allows students to see how many career contacts they have, starting with their own families.



The category of Work and Other also has two activities, both of which address the topic of “achieving goals”. For example, as part of the procedure of one of these items, students should

“work in pairs to develop a case study demonstrating obstacles teenagers may face in meeting their personal and career goals” (p. 662).

The final activity, in the Gender and Work category, focuses on gender stereotypes in relation to work, with the purpose being that

“Students become aware of the changes taking place in our society that affect the career opportunities of men and women. Students are made aware of their own stereotypes and given the opportunity to adjust their assumptions and beliefs” (p. 624).

Family. Twelve activities (25%) fall within the categories of Family, Gender and Family, Work and Family, and Family and Other. Of these, five activities are in the category of Family, and focus on three sub-topics: “families beliefs and behavioural standards”, “changing family structures”, and “family stages”. An activity on “family beliefs and behavioural standards” asks students to,

“discuss factors that influence family relationships in terms of established individual beliefs and behavioural standards” (p. 398)

while the purpose of an activity focusing on “family stages” is to encourage students to,

“explore the various stages that families go through, and the roles family members play in those developmental stages” (p. 412).

The Family and Other category has three items which deal with broad topic areas, and the topic of family is included as only one part of the activity. For example, a grade 8 Family Life Education activity asks students to consider what factors influence decision-making. Family is presented in the activity as only one factor which can influence decisions, with peers and media presented as other influencing factors.

Each of two activities on Work and Family address a different sub-topic (“family work patterns” and “family as part of a job search network”). There were also two activities in the category of Gender and Work, dealing with “communication in the family” and “the affect of changes during puberty on family relationships”.

Other. The category of Other contains six activities. These activities focus on “healthy relationships”, “role models”, “personal attributes”, “post-secondary education”, and “sexual decision-making”. The purpose of one of these activities serves to illustrate their general nature,

“Students gain direction for their future by finding out about people they hold in high esteem. These role models may serve as personal templates for their own development and show how students can shape their own futures by proactive choices that lead them toward success” (p. 560).

#### Categories by Grade Level and By Component

The second analysis of the *Suggested Classroom Activities* examines the categories by grade level and by component to determine whether the major concepts presented in the activities (gender, work, and family) vary by grade level and by component.

Categories by Grade Level. This analysis examined differences in categories according to grade level. Table 7 illustrates the number of activities in each category and their association with the four grade levels.

**Table 7**  
**Categories by Grade Level:**  
**Activities**

<b><u>Themes in Each Grade Level</u></b>					
<b>Categories</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>	<b>Grade 9</b>	<b>Grade 10</b>	<b>Grade 11/12</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Gender</b>					
<b>Gender and Work</b>		1			1
<b>Gender and Family</b>	2				2
<b>Gender and Other</b>		2	2	1	5
<b>Work</b>	6	7	7	2	22
<b>Work and Family</b>	2				2
<b>Work and Other</b>			2		2
<b>Family</b>	1	1	2	1	5
<b>Family and Other</b>	2			1	3
<b>Other</b>	1	2	3		6
<b>Total</b>	14	13	16	5	48

As Table 7 illustrates, a similar number of activities are designed for each of grades 8, 9, and 10. However there are significantly fewer activities (5) for grade 11/12 students. In grade 8, activities on both work and family topics are equally emphasized, while both grades 9 and 10 place the greatest emphasis on work. Although there are very few activities for grade 11/12, approximately equal attention is given to all three concepts.

Categories by Component. Table 8 illustrates how activities in the categories vary according to component (Family Life Education, Career Awareness, and Career Exploration).

Table 8

**Categories by Component:**  
**Activities**

<b><u>Themes in Each Component</u></b>				
<b>Categories</b>	<b>Family Life Education</b>	<b>Career Awareness</b>	<b>Career Exploration</b>	<b>Total Themes</b>
<b>Gender</b>				
<b>Gender and Work</b>			1	1
<b>Gender and Family</b>	2			2
<b>Gender and Other</b>	5			5
<b>Work</b>		10	12	22
<b>Work and Family</b>			2	2
<b>Work and Other</b>		1	1	2
<b>Family</b>	5			5
<b>Family and Other</b>	3			3
<b>Other</b>	2	3	1	6
<b>Total</b>	17	14	17	48

As Table 8 indicates, the Family Life Education and Career Exploration components have an equal number of activities (17), with fewer (14) in the Career Awareness component. When examined by category, all of the gender-related activities are in the Family Life Education component except for one on Gender and Work in the Career Exploration component. Similarly, all of the family-related activities are in the Family Life Education component except for two activities on work and family, which are also in the Career Exploration component. The work-related activities are found in both the Career Awareness and the Career Exploration components, with slightly more in the latter. When examined by component, Family Life Education activities

focus on family-related, gender-related, and the Other category, while most of the Career Awareness and Career Exploration activities focus on the work-related categories.

### Evaluation Using Selected Feminist Criteria

The third analysis of the *Suggested Classroom Activities* document evaluates the activities according to three feminist criteria: stereotyping, context, and diversity. As stated earlier in this Chapter, these criteria were selected based on the feminist belief that these criteria are useful in developing inclusive curricula. At the end of this section, the activities are evaluated for an additional criteria, relevance, in order to examine the relationship between the activities and the Learning Outcomes for which they are intended.

The first criteria, stereotyping, is used to evaluate two things: whether there are examples of stereotypes in the activity, and whether stereotyping is acknowledged in the activity. There were no examples of stereotyping and only five of the forty-eight activities acknowledged stereotyping. In these latter activities, typically there was only a brief or implicit acknowledgment of stereotyping. For example, one grade 9 Family Life Education activity asks students,

“to look for sexuality images represented in various media”

and goes on to ask

“Are there different images for men and women?” (p. 408).

Similarly, in a grade 8 Family Life Education activity, students are asked to examine the roles and responsibilities of males and females in different families, suggesting that the division of labour in some families may reflect stereotypic gender roles. Whereas these activities implicitly address gender stereotypes, a few activities are more direct, such as a grade 9 Career Exploration activity which includes defining gender stereotypes as part of its procedure.

The second feminist criteria evaluated items for sociohistorical context. Six items place gender, work and/or family within a sociohistorical context. One activity asked students to

“look at family patterns regarding occupational choice” (p. 588).

This is accomplished by having students,

“interview family members and record any messages or responses they make about work” (p. 588),

and by completing an occupational genogram which

“looks at the careers of grandparents, parents, and siblings” (p. 588).

Another item requires students to examine the changing work patterns of men and women by considering factors such as,

“affirmative action”, “greater cultural awareness”, and “economic changes-two-income families becoming the norm” (p. 624).

The third criteria, diversity, evaluated whether attention was given to either gender, ethnic, or family diversity within the activities. Eight of the 48 activities (17%) address diversity issues in some way. For example, one Grade 9 Family Life Education activity is concerned with understanding human relationships, and more specifically the gender and cultural diversity that can influence relationships. The purpose of another Family Life Education activity, designed for Grade 10 students, is to,

“discuss and examine gender differences around sex roles and sexual decision making” (p. 426).

Further, diverse family forms is the focus of a number of activities. In a grade 9 Family Life Education activity, students are asked to,

“brainstorm and record types of family structures (e.g., nuclear, extended, blended, adoptive, foster, single parent, step-family)” (p. 398),

while a grade 11/12 Family Life Education activity asks students to examine the changing patterns of North American families and the factors which effect the structure and roles within families.

In addition to the feminist criteria, the documents were also evaluated for an additional criteria, relevance, in order to determine whether the activities were relevant to the Learning Outcome(s) of the specific components for which they were recommended. The analysis indicated that 41 of 48 activities (85%) were in fact relevant to the Learning Outcomes listed.

Two examples illustrate activities which were not directly related to the Learning Outcomes. In one instance, the intended Outcome was to

“identify and practice skills necessary for communicating with family members” (p. 388).

Although this activity uses role playing scenarios as a means of understanding and practicing communication skills, all of these scenarios focus either on dating or friendship relationships rather than on family relationships. Thus, the intended Learning Outcome is not supported by the role playing scenarios provided.

Another activity asks students to,

“explore the reasons for ending relationships, the feelings associated with loss or rejection, and the skills needed to end relationships in appropriate ways” (p. 420).

However, the stated Learning Outcome expects students to,

“analyze the components needed to build and maintain healthy relationships”.

While it is recognized that understanding how and why relationships end is a important lesson for students, it is not the same thing as building and maintaining relationships.

### Analysis of the Gender Equitable Instruction Appendix

One of the appendices to the *CAPP Suggested Strategies for Instruction* document is entitled *Gender Equitable Instruction*. Although the information included in this Appendix is quite different from the other *CAPP* materials analyzed, the relevance of this Appendix to the purpose of the study indicates that it should be included in the analysis. The *Gender Equitable Instruction* Appendix is the only part of the curriculum which focuses solely on issues of gender and gender equity. Thus, the purpose of the fourth analysis was to determine whether there was any correspondence between the general information provided in the *Gender Equitable Instruction Appendix* and the specific instructional strategies listed in the *Suggested Classroom Activities* document.

The *Gender Equitable Instruction Appendix* discusses the effectiveness of 15 instructional strategies for achieving gender equity and their advantages and disadvantages are noted. The instructional strategies that are presented are varied, ranging from case studies to debates. In using debates, for example, it is suggested that,

“Debates will appeal to many female students because the overt focus is on presentation skills, which can be a catalyst to encourage research and problem-solving. Also, as with case studies, debates encourage divergent and integrative thinking. Direct competition among male and female students of this age group creates the risk of girls’ rejecting academic achievement in favour of opportunities to be seen as non-threatening, pleasing or “feminine”. Suggested evaluation techniques that reduce one-on-one competition may be helpful in this regard” (p. 120).

With the co-operative learning strategy, students are placed into groups of four or five to discuss specific issues. According to the *Gender Equitable Instruction* appendix,

“Competitiveness is most likely to be a problem when boys in the group are particularly knowledgeable about the materials or equipment provided (often in scientific or technical fields) and they may monopolize opportunities.



Stereotypes can manifest themselves in assigned roles, (e.g. girls may be expected to be good “encouragers” and “observers”)” (p. 119).

To compare the instructional techniques discussed in the *Gender Equitable Instruction Appendix* to those utilized in the 48 activities analyzed in the *Suggested Classroom Activities* document, two steps were taken. First, it was determined which of the instructional strategies were incorporated into the procedures of each activity and how frequently these were used. The kinds of instructional strategies used for each activity was easily determined since all the activities include a section labeled “Instructional Strategies” which provides a list of the all the strategies incorporated into the procedure of that activity.

The second step was to compare the instructional strategies identified for the activities to the 15 strategies discussed in the *Gender Equitable Instruction* appendix. This involved noting which strategies from the Appendix were utilized within the activities as well as noting those strategies which were presented in the Appendix but were not utilized.

Based on this comparison a number of findings emerged. Co-operative learning (i.e. small group work) was the most commonly used strategy, incorporated into 33 of the 48 activities examined, while direct instruction (i.e. lectures) was used in 29 of the activities, and brainstorming was used in 24 of the activities. Also, it was found that three of the fifteen strategies discussed in the *Gender Equitable Instruction Appendix* were not incorporated in to any of the 48 activities.

These strategies included field studies which are,

“sometimes used overtly to address gender issues” (p. 120),

case studies which,

“will appeal to may female students”

because,

“it facilitates integrative thinking, and it allows use of communication skills” (p. 119),

and portfolios which

“can have particular value to female students because of their potential to build self-esteem” (p. 121).

### Summary of Findings

Because of the complexity of the analysis, a brief summary of the findings may be useful. There were 249 themes recorded from the *Integrated Resource Package (IRP)*. Almost half of these (47%) were work-related themes, with the major emphasis on three sub-topics within the category of Work: personal career goals and interests, the nature of work, and understanding career opportunities. The next largest number of themes (35%) were found the category of Other, and included themes which were unrelated to the purposes of this study. Of the remaining themes, 17% were family-related, with the major emphasis on three sub-topics within the category of Family: “family roles and responsibilities”, “family expectations and relationships”, and “family values and traditions”. Gender-related themes accounted for 5% of the themes, with the major emphasis on two sub-topics within the category of Gender and Work: “gender and changing work patterns” and “gender’s effect on job availability”. Of the 30 sub-topics identified in the analysis, 19 had 5 or fewer themes (5 of 5 in gender, 7 of 11 in work, 5 of 8 in family and 2 of 6 in Other).

In examining categories by grade level, most of the gender-related themes were found in grade 9, with none in grade 11/12. Work-related themes were most likely to be found in grades 9, 10, and 11/12, where they received similar attention. The majority of family-related themes were found in grades 8, 9, 10, while themes in Other were found most often in grade 8, followed by grade 9. When examining categories by components, most of the gender-related themes were

found in the Career Exploration component, followed by Family Life Education. Work-related themes were found in two components, Career Exploration followed by Career Awareness. Nearly all of the family-related themes were found in the Family Life Education component. The majority of Other themes were also found in Family Life Education.

All themes were evaluated according to three feminist criteria for inclusive curricula, and only 8% of the themes met at least one of the criteria. Diversity was the criteria most likely to be met, with 14 themes. Four themes acknowledged the possibility of stereotyping and one theme presented gender in a sociohistorical context. No examples of stereotypes were found in the documents analyzed.

When the interrelationship between sections of the components were examined (Learning Outcomes, Suggested Instructional strategies, Suggested Assessment Strategies), it was found that in the Family Life Education component, 21% of the Learning Outcomes did not have a supporting Instructional Strategy, and 11% of the Instructional Strategies did not have a supporting Assessment Strategy. The opposite pattern was found in the Career Awareness component, where only 11% of the Learning Outcomes were not supported, but nearly 40% of the Instructional Strategies did not have a related Assessment Strategy. In the Career Exploration component, all Learning Outcomes were supported by the Suggested Instructional Strategies, but approximately 25% did not have related Assessment Strategy. In addition, 25% of the Learning Outcomes throughout the three components were repeated, either in full or with only one or two words changed and different grade levels.

In the final analysis of the *IRP*, descriptions of the recommended resources provided in the *Learning Resource Appendix* were compared with the content of the three components. In the

Family Life Education component, the content emphasizes family roles and relationships, but only one resource is provided on family topics. Further, although the majority of resources recommended for this component address issues of “sexuality”, this topic receives little content emphasis. There was a strong link in the Career Awareness component between the recommended resources and the content on “career choices” and “student self-awareness”. However, although the resources were recommended on other topics (“job equity”, “Canadian Advancement”, “the importance of math”), these topics were not reflected in the content of the component. The Career Exploration component was unique, in that all of the content was supported by at least one or two recommended resources. However, the majority of resources for this component were on “career choices” and “student self-awareness”.

Analysis of the 48 Suggested Classroom Activities recommended for use with the Family Life Education, Career Awareness, and Career Exploration components indicated that the majority of these activities (56%) were in work-related categories and that 17% of the activities included gender in some way. Activities recommended for grades 9 and 10 emphasized work-related themes, while both work-related and family-related activities were recommended for grade 8. The few activities recommended for grade 11/12 covered all three concepts of gender, work, and family. Nearly all of the gender-related and family-related activities were found in the Family Life Education component, and all of the work-related activities were found in the Career Awareness and Career Exploration components.

The *Suggested Classroom Activities* were evaluated according to three feminist criteria (stereotyping, context, and diversity) plus an additional criteria of relevance. Eight activities (17%) addressed diversity issues in some way, while slightly fewer acknowledged stereotyping or

provided a sociohistorical context (5 and 6, respectively). Although there were a few exceptions, the majority of activities (85%) were relevant to the Learning Outcomes listed.

The final analysis compared the instructional strategies actually used in the *Suggested Classroom Activities* to those discussed in the *Gender Equitable Instruction Appendix*. The instructional strategies utilized most often in the Classroom Activities were co-operative learning, direct instruction, and brainstorming. Three strategies (field studies, case studies, and portfolios) were recommended as strategies to achieve gender equity in the classroom, but none were incorporated into the *Classroom Activities* examined.

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Before discussing the findings of the study and drawing some conclusions, two reminders are useful. First, although gender was one of the concepts investigated in this study, it is recognized that the *CAPP* curriculum was not developed as a unit focused specifically on gender. Nevertheless, given the commitment of the B.C. Ministry of Education, as stated in the *Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Plan* (B.C. Ministry, 1994, p. 20), to provide "equitable opportunities for all students", and given the focus of the curriculum on careers and personal lifestyles, including families, gender is obviously an important and relevant factor in this curriculum. Second, although this curriculum was not developed specifically as a family life education curriculum, at the same time, it does include a specifically-named family life education component and many of the topics presented in *CAPP* are similar to those included in the field of family life education. Thus, the feminist principles regarding family life education have relevance for the curriculum. Further, the feminist/family life education literature, reviewed in Chapter 3, emphasizes the importance of developing gender-inclusive curricula, i.e., curricula that is equitable and relevant for both male and female students. Thus, the feminist principles are consistent with the intent of the B.C. Ministry of Education regarding this curriculum.

In this chapter each of the seven principles which make up the feminist framework presented in Chapter 3 will be used to discuss major findings regarding the concepts of gender, work, and family. In addition, significant findings regarding other aspects of the curriculum will also be discussed. Implications of the study will be presented and general conclusions will be drawn.

### The Concept of Work

In this curriculum, the greatest amount of attention was given to the concept of work. This is not surprising given that the focus of the curriculum is on career and personal planning. Within this concept, major attention was placed on self-understanding in relation to work (personal interests, goals, and abilities), and on understanding the world of work (the nature of work, career opportunities). Although this is appropriate for the purposes of this curriculum, most of the content on work was exploratory in nature and repetitive across grade levels.

Several questions can be raised about the presentation of the work concept in the curriculum. First, it was found that while much of the content in the curriculum was work related, curiously little attention was given to gender in relation to work even though gender significantly influences personal interests, career goals, job availability, and job success. Some themes focus on gender factors that influence changing work patterns and job selection, including some attention to non-traditional jobs, but little depth is provided in any of the documents to assist teacher in developing this area of the curriculum. Thus, the presentation of this concept in the curriculum appears to be both narrow and superficial.

Second, when the feminist/family life education framework is applied to the concept of work, the first principle of this framework indicates that curriculum documents should address gender inequities in both paid and unpaid work. Although there are a number of places in the curriculum where attention to this issue might have been appropriate, the *CAPP* documents either failed to address gender inequities in paid and unpaid work or did so in simplistic ways. For example, one activity simply asked students to examine the disadvantages and benefits of paid and unpaid work. Since women have historically spent more time doing unpaid work and have less

options in the paid work arena than their male counterparts, this would have been an opportune time to explore these gender differences and the gender stereotypes which have contributed to these work patterns. Particularly at the senior level of the curriculum, this would have enriched the curriculum and assisted students to better understand the world of work which they are or will be experiencing.

In addition, little attention in the document is given to the work-family interface, with the interrelationship between these two concepts presented primarily in the context of the family's influence on career choices. Other important work-family issues, such as working single parents, support services for working parents, and balancing work and family roles, are not addressed. These topics also represent missed opportunities in the curriculum, particularly at the upper grade levels.

#### The Concept of Family

Despite a component called Family Life Education, the concept of family received significantly less attention than the concept of work. In the documents, the greatest attention was focused on exploring family roles and responsibilities, with only minimal attention to other family-related themes, such as family expectations and relationships and family values and traditions. As with the concept of work, much of the family-related content was repetitive across grade levels, leaving little opportunity to introduce additional relevant and more complex content. Of specific concern is the lack of attention to other family-related topics such as family feelings and emotions, conflict in the family, power differentials within families, and the work-family interface. The role of the family in building self-esteem, an important factor in gender equity and job success for



females, also received no attention in these documents. These all represent significant missed opportunities in addressing the concept of family.

Further, gender as a factor in the allocation of family roles is seldom mentioned. The second principle of the feminist/family life education framework recognized the importance of gender and position in families and refers to how family roles are often assigned on the basis of gender. Although students are asked to “graph the jobs (e.g., housework) done by each family member” and compare results “focusing on gender and age differences” (Province of British Columbia, 1995a, p. 74), there is little explanation or follow-up to this activity and little that would help teachers to take this activity beyond a gender descriptive level. That is, although different family roles may be described, nowhere does the curriculum address the gender inequities that have been endemic to the work done in families or how power in family relationships may affect family roles. Inclusion of these additional concepts would seem to be important in providing an inclusive and relevant curriculum.

Further, the sixth principle in the feminist/family life education framework emphasizes that curricula should recognize family diversity in North America. More specifically, this principle proposes that acceptance and validity be given to the diverse kinds of contemporary families and that FLE no longer focus primarily on nuclear families. When the documents were evaluated for the feminist criteria of diversity, only limited attention to such diversity was found. Indeed, there was limited attention to any kinds of diversity (gender, ethnic, and family). Because this is provincially mandated curriculum, the lack of attention to diversity is seen as a significant limitation.

### The Concept of Gender

The third concept, the concept of gender, received the least amount of attention in the *CAPP* documents. This is of major concern, since gender is interrelated with both work and family and since gender is a significant factor in an inclusive curriculum. Despite the lack of attention to the concept of gender, however, there are a number of important points that can be made about the presentation of this concept.

As noted in the findings, no examples of stereotypes were identified in the documents. In fact, there was some evidence that suggests that some contents was presented in order to potentially contradict common stereotypes. In one Grade 8 example, role play scenarios were used to help students practice assertive communication skills. One of these scenarios included a female character who was the sexual aggressor and a male character who felt pressured by this behavior. Although this appears to be an attempt by the curriculum developers to avoid stereotypes, it is questionable whether simply reversing stereotypical behaviors will be educationally meaningful to students or will help them to develop a curriculum that is inclusive.

Although the absence of stereotypes might be considered as evidence of gender equity, it may also indicate that the curriculum has not given sufficient attention to content where gender differences and/or the possibility of gender stereotyping are in fact relevant and need to be brought to the attention of students. Most of the terminology used in the *CAPP* curriculum was found to be gender neutral. That is, words like “male and female” and “girls and boys” were rarely used. It is unclear whether the developers of the curriculum equated “gender equity” with “gender neutrality”, whether gender neutrality was viewed as a way to avoid gender stereotypes, or whether this gender-neutral approach was selected because it was the safe or “politically correct” approach. Regardless,

the absence of gender terms may create the impression of a curriculum relevant to both male and females.

Serious questions need to be raised about this appearance of gender neutrality, however the application of the feminist/family life education framework indicates a number of areas where the curriculum fails to adequately acknowledge that gender influences experiences and where it fails to include discussions on gender differences and on social factors which may affect the sexes differently.

According to the third principle in the framework, the needs and experiences of both males and females should be included and adequately addressed. However, because *CAPP* is presented as a gender neutral curriculum, it rarely differentiates between males and females. For example, one Suggested Classroom Activity focuses on the topic of birth control and unplanned pregnancy and includes a worksheet on examining available options such as adoption and abortion. Although this topic deals with female reproductive choices and may have been included with female students in mind, the activity itself does not present the issues as more significant for one gender than the other. As well, little attention is given to male roles and responsibilities in both birth control decisions and their role in decisions around unplanned pregnancies and their consequences.

As well, although there are numerous work-related activities which ask students to identify their personal attributes, interests, and skills, and then relate these to potential jobs, these activities do not give any attention to how gender may effect the development of a student's personal interests and skills, or to how gender has historically been a factor in career options and opportunities. Thus, the curriculum does not emphasize one gender over the other but because of this, it fails to adequately address potentially relevant differences between the genders.

Further evidence of the failure of the curriculum to adequately address gender is identified when the fourth principle in the framework is applied to the curriculum. This principle focuses on within group differences, recognizing that “the lives of individual women- and of individual men- are diverse” (Walker and Thompson, 1984, p. 551), and recommending that this diversity be acknowledged in educational programs. Not only are the differences *between* males and females rarely highlighted in the *CAPP* curriculum, the differences *within* gender groups are also not addressed. In one activity, students are asked to “identify mentors and resources (both within the school and elsewhere) to support personal development and career plans” (Province of British Columbia, 1995b, p. 628) and to, “As a class, discuss the overall characteristics of mentors, how we can find them, and how we can access them” (p. 628). This particular activity overlooks individual differences in that it fails to recognize that the area in which students live and attend school may greatly impact their access to mentors who can “support personal development and career plans” (p. 628). In general, this curriculum does not emphasize or even acknowledge *within* group differences. Again, this may be an attempt to create an equitable curriculum or it may reflect that curriculum developers are reluctant to address differences within gender groups or to even acknowledge individual differences.

The fifth principle of the feminist/family life education framework indicates that the sociohistorical context of gender should be acknowledged in a curriculum, i.e., it should recognize that the sex/gender system is socially constructed and changes over time. There was little evidence of attention to this context in the curriculum. Only two activities, which identify factors that influence the changing work patterns of men and women, placed gender within a sociohistorical context. As with other concepts, there are a number of “missed opportunities” within the

curriculum where attention to a sociohistorical context for gender could have been provided to enhance the curriculum. These are not sufficient to provide students with an understanding of how gender is socially constructed.

The application of these principles indicates that, rather than being gender neutral, the curriculum might be more accurately characterized as “gender absent”. Although gender is a relevant factor in choosing and preparing for jobs, in the allocation of family roles and responsibilities, and in many other elements of the curriculum, the concept of gender has been consistently ignored or avoided.

In the literature review in Chapter 2, it was noted that studies examining gender bias in FLE found that FLE educational materials tended to endorse inequity between males and females. Because the *CAPP* curriculum tends to be gender absent, the same finding did not emerge in this study. Gender inequity was not present and rarely acknowledged with the curriculum components or the activities. While *CAPP* did not endorse gender inequity, it also fails to acknowledge inequity at all.

### Additional Findings

Before discussing other analyses of the curriculum, the large number of sub-topics which have five or fewer themes or items across all components and across all grade levels (grade 8 to 11/12) should be noted. While the large number of sub-topics may create the impression of breadth of content in the curriculum, in fact a number of sub-topics (i.e. gender and family roles and responsibilities, family work patterns and expectations, and personal characteristics), are addressed quite superficially.

Providing practical and relevant information is the seventh feminist/family life education principle which emphasizes the need for curricula to be useful and relevant to students' lives. One way to achieve this is for a curriculum to be appropriate for students' age and grade level. This analysis did not take a developmental approach, and thus determining the relevance or age appropriateness of the curriculum is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, some issues emerged from the findings of this study which raise general questions and comments.

A review of the *Suggested Classroom Activities*' purposes and procedures indicated that most activities were in fact age appropriate. However, three activities, were identified as potentially beyond the abilities and/or comfort level of the students. These activities deal with concepts that seem difficult for students to relate to or ask students to discuss topics with their peers which would likely be embarrassing or uncomfortable. For example, a Family Life Education activity intended for grade 9 students requires students to,

“discuss factors that influence family relationships in terms of established individual beliefs and behavioural standards using a web, lists, descriptions, etc.” (p.398).

This task requires much insight and understanding on the part of the students and may be difficult for a grade 9 student to achieve. Similarly, another Family Life Education activity asks grade 8 students to “pair and share” by forming groups to discuss,

“ways in which they have changed since elementary school (physical: size, body hair, body shape, changed body parts; emotional: new feelings about self and others, particularly the opposite sex; social: new friends, new expectations from adults)” (p. 376).

This may be an embarrassing task for grade 8 students to carry out.

Since it is not the intent of this study to determine how the curriculum is applied in the classroom, it cannot be said how appropriate these activities are for the students. However, based

on their descriptions in the documents, the activities do not appear to be age appropriate for students.

While this analysis does not take an educational theoretical perspective, the findings do raise some interesting questions with implications for education. First, the analysis shows that the majority of content dealing with gender is offered in grade 9. This raises the question of why gender was not a major issue across all the grade levels. It is not possible to determine from the findings of this study why this is the case. One factor that might have influenced this is timing. Perhaps curriculum developers felt that grade 9 students were at the most appropriate age for learning about gender as a factor in influencing experiences.

Further, it was found that in the *IRP*, work related content was given the least emphasis in grade 8 and the most in grade 11/12. Although the findings do not indicate why grade 8 contains the least amount of content on work, it can be speculated that it is also related to the age of the students. Grade 8 students may be too young to consider work as a viable consideration in their lives. In contrast, the *Suggested Classroom Activities* document provided many more work-related activities for grade 8 than grade 11/12. It raises the question of why more work activities were not designed to support the work focus of the grade 11/12 *IRP* content.

Also, a comparison between documents revealed differences in the focus of the components. In the *IRP*, the Career Exploration component contains the majority of content on gender, while in the *Suggested Classroom Activities* document the Family Life Education activities were found to contain the majority of the content on gender. This may be an indication that there are not enough gender-related activities in the Career Exploration component of the *Suggested*

*Classroom Activities* document to support the gender content included in the Career Exploration component of the *IRP*.

Finally, while an entire appendix was devoted to *Gender Equitable Instruction*, no mention of this appendix or the information in it was brought to teachers attention in the main curriculum document or activities. For example, when the strategy of direct instruction (a basic technique used by the teacher to convey facts or ideas to the class) is discussed in the *Gender Equitable Instruction Appendix*, teachers are warned that although this strategy “may appear to be the most “gender-neutral” technique... there are still areas which research suggests the teacher should be vigilant” (p. 120). A number of these areas are listed including:

“overall, teachers interact with boys far more frequently than with girls” ,

“teachers ask girls lower-order questions”,

and,

“responses directed toward girls are more likely to be simple, acceptances, such as “okay” and “un-huh”” (p. 120).

While these are significant factors to consider, teachers are not alerted to these issues within the classroom activities themselves. None of the activities make references to the *Gender Equitable Instruction Appendix* which might remind teachers of key gender issues or inclusive instruction techniques. Perhaps an alert or some kind of symbol within the activities themselves would have been useful in this regard.

### Conclusions and Implications

While it is recognized that the *CAPP* curriculum was not developed from the same framework as was applied in this study, the framework is relevant to family life education in general and to gender inclusive curriculum curricula in particular. For this reason, one would



expect that at least some of the *CAPP* content would emerge as meeting the principles of the framework. This was not the case, however. The findings revealed a gender-absent curriculum, with gender in relation to work and family, gender inequities, and gender stereotypes rarely acknowledged or discussed. Throughout the curriculum, there were many instances of “missed opportunities,” where attention to these and other related gender ideas was needed in order to meet the professed goal of an inclusive curriculum. Thus, this curriculum provides a very limited perspective on the concepts of gender, work, and family.

As well, much of the *CAPP* content was found to be repetitive, with the same or similar topics discussed throughout the components at all grade levels. Serious questions must be raised about the educational relevance of this repetition. Although some repetition may be necessary to ensure that students understand and can build on previous knowledge, at the same time, this repetition results in the failure to introduce new and more complex concepts at each succeeding grade level. It is unlikely that a curriculum with this amount of repetition on relatively descriptive and superficial topics will challenge students to think more broadly about serious and complex issues related to the concepts under investigation in this study.

It is also of concern to note that many of the recommended resources for teachers were unrelated to the content in the curriculum. This calls in to question the usefulness of these resources for teachers, particularly those who are new to teaching this curriculum and those who may have limited background for teaching concepts.

The findings of this study have implications for curriculum developers, for teachers, and for researchers. Because a curriculum document such as *CAPP* represents the official position of the Ministry of Education, those responsible for its development need to ensure that it adequately

reflects the state of contemporary knowledge regarding the area. In this particular case, the curriculum might have been enhanced has some specific framework or perspective regarding inclusive curricula been employed. Efforts also need to be made to ensure that all parts of the curriculum document (Learning Outcomes, Instructional Strategies, Assessment Strategies, Learning Resources) are interrelated and support each other. The lack of integration may undermine the potential of the curriculum to achieve its' intended outcomes. As well, if the curriculum is to be relevant, serious attention needs to be given to issues of repetition across the curriculum and the appropriateness of content at different age and grade levels. Those who teach the curriculum also need to be aware of these potential limitations in curriculum documents. Through their own knowledge or experience, teachers may be able to modify and enhance the curriculum in order to overcome the shortcomings identified in this study.

Further investigation of this curriculum is warranted. For example, evaluation of the curriculum using a developmental perspective might address questions of timing and relevance of the content of the curriculum. As well, questions about family and ethnic diversity might be investigated using an Anglo-conformity perspective (Gordon, 1964). In addition to investigations of the curriculum documents, other kinds of studies are also warranted. For example, it would be useful to determine how the curriculum is applied in the classroom (focusing on teacher decisions and practices related to the curriculum) or to how it is experienced by the students (focusing on student perceptions of the curriculum and it's relevance).

This study contributes to the literature on family life education in several ways. First, it has investigated the inclusive nature of a curriculum associated with the field of family life education, an area that has received little attention. Understanding the inclusive nature of this curriculum is

important as it may help us to determine if the needs of all students are being addressed adequately, and if the experiences of both male and female students are considered. This is significant since *CAPP* is a mandated provincial curriculum which reaches all students in British Columbia.

Second, unlike other examinations of educational materials, this study uses a framework. While this framework was developed to guide this study, it is not limited in its application and could potentially be used for the analysis of other related educational materials. Further, by reflecting a feminist perspective and by evaluating the inclusive nature of a family life education program, this research responds to calls within the feminist FLE literature to attend to curricula that is not gender inclusive.

Finally, this is one of the few studies on family life education in British Columbia and in Canada. Because education is a provincial rather than federal responsibility in Canada, school curricula in Canada is not the same across provinces. Thus, to broaden our understanding of family life education in Canadian schools, studies will need to be conducted in each of the provinces. This study contributes to that research.

The application of a feminist framework was useful in guiding this study and discussing findings. However, comments on relevance and the practical nature of the curriculum are general in nature since an educational theoretical perspective was not applied. The application of such a perspective to the curriculum would be useful as it may indicate the extent to which this curriculum is comprehensive, up-to-date, and relevant to students lives.

Future research in the areas suggested would contribute to the literature on inclusive curricula and family life education in general. Further, it may provide specific recommendations for the improvement of the *CAPP* curriculum.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **INTEGRATED RESOURCE PACKAGE COMPONENT**



### **PRESCRIBED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

To develop students' understanding of the role of the family and capacity for responsible decision making in their personal relationships.

*It is expected that students will:*

- identify stereotypical views of gender roles and responsibilities that exist within a family
- identify a variety of factors that influence family relationships
- evaluate the impact of peer, media, and social trends on decision making in their personal relationships
- outline the physical, social, and emotional changes associated with puberty
- identify and practise the skills necessary for communicating with family members
- relate family values and traditions to their own beliefs and behaviour standards

### **SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

- Have students share and discuss their own families' values and traditions.
- Have students compare models of the family from different cultures as portrayed in the news media, in film, and in literature.
- Have students use case studies to identify communication styles that help young people communicate with family members in a positive, caring way.
- Have students role-play situations in which they practise presenting their thoughts and opinions to their family members in a respectful, but assertive, manner.
- Have students create individual timelines, indicating the important events and changes in their lives. Then have them predict the changes that they expect to occur in the future. Have them differentiate between those changes that they have control over and those over which they have little or no control.
- Have students view current recommended video materials relating to changes during adolescence and then discuss the issues related to sexuality. Members of the local community may be of assistance with this topic, acting as guest speakers, providing resources, or acting as facilitators during discussions.
- Have students discuss the emotional changes associated with adolescence. Topics could include the types of emotions experienced in adolescence and how to express emotions in appropriate ways.
- Have students identify their families' values and traditions in their journals. Then have them discuss how these beliefs affect their behaviour standards.

## GRADE 8 • Personal Development (Family Life Education)

### SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

- Collect evidence of students' ability to:
  - list physical, social, emotional, and intellectual changes that occur during adolescence
  - identify current social trends from media resources, and from different times, cultures, and religions
  - show their awareness and acceptance of different family traditions and values in their discussions, comparisons, and reflections on videos or novels
- Look for evidence of students' ability to:
  - identify their own beliefs and values in relation to their families' values and traditions
  - listen and communicate respectfully
  - be receptive to the views and opinions of others
  - share appropriately with other group members

### RECOMMENDED LEARNING RESOURCES

#### *Print Material*

- Sexuality: An Education Resource Book

#### *Video*

- Abstinence: Deciding to Wait
- Know How: A Video on Abstinence For Teens
- Madison Series
- Right from the Start - A Look at Dating Violence Prevention for Teens (School Version)
- Sexuality (from the Degraasi Falks series)
- Teenage Father

#### *Multimedia*

- Youth Suicide Awareness

*For a comprehensive list of recommended learning resources, see Appendix B.*

## **APPENDIX B**

### **SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITY**

**Purpose**

Students recognize aggressive, passive, and assertive communication, and begin to develop assertive communication skills.

**Learning outcomes** — It is expected that students will

- identify and practise skills necessary for communicating with family members.

**Preparation and planning**

- Prepare an overhead using "Aggressive, Passive, and Assertive Communication" as a master.
- Make one copy of the handout, "Aggressive Communication Role Plays" for each student.

**Procedures**

1. Explain to students that what we communicate in a relationship reflects the way we feel about ourselves and our role in the relationship. Display the overhead, and discuss the differences between passive, aggressive, and assertive communication.
2. Ask students to give examples of passive, aggressive, and assertive communication in a variety of family relationships.
3. Distribute the role plays. Have students work in twos or threes to complete one or more of the role plays described on the handout. Instruct them that their dialogue should demonstrate assertive communication. Students may wish to use the supplied dialogue to begin, or they may use their own language and change the names for the given scenarios. These may be presented to the rest of the class.
4. Debrief the process, asking questions such as the following:
  - Which type of communication is most useful in maintaining an open, equal relationship?
  - Why?
  - How does being assertive affect the way we feel about ourselves?

**Suggested time**

- 1 hour

**Resources**

- student materials provided on the following pages

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**Assessment strategies**

- Observe students' role plays, looking for evidence that they are able to communicate assertively.



Performance Assessment/Student Self-Assessment

**Instructional strategies**

- direct instruction
- class and group discussion (co-operative learning)
- role play

**Extensions/options**

- The Ministry of Education's *Family Life Education 7-9: Teacher Resource Manual* contains additional information and activity suggestions related to this topic; see Lessons 3, 13, and 21.

# AGGRESSIVE, PASSIVE, AND ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

**Aggressive**

- states feelings and views directly

**But**

- may hurt others' feelings
- violates the rights of others to express their views
- suggests that the views of others are not as important or as valuable as the speaker's
- insists on always "winning"

**Passive**

- does not clearly state feelings or views
- allows others to impose their views
- undermines self-confidence of speaker
- always "gives in"

**Assertive**

- states feelings and views directly

**and**

- is caring and respectful of the feelings and views of others
- enhances the self-esteem of the speaker when she or he takes responsibility for own decisions
- accepts that one cannot always win but maintains self-respect
- respects the personal space of the other person

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

## ROLE PLAYS

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1. Jennifer wants Marie to come with her to a beach party Friday night. She was told about the party by an older boy who said he hoped to see her there. Jennifer has a crush on this guy and is thrilled that he's interested. Marie knows the party will be unchaperoned and will probably include a lot of drinking and making out. She would have to lie to her parents about where she was going. She wants to be a good friend to Jennifer, who is nervous about going to the party on her own, but she doesn't feel comfortable about taking part in such activities. Jennifer accuses her of being uptight, and says it's time Marie started growing up.

**MARIE:** It's got nothing to do with growing up. It's how you like to have fun. Necking with a stranger at a drunken beach party is not my idea of a good time.

**JENNIFER:** Please, Marie. For my sake, as a good friend? I'll die if I don't get to see Brian!

**MARIE'S ASSERTIVE RESPONSE:**

**JENNIFER:** Come just for a while. If you don't like it, we can leave.

**MARIE'S ASSERTIVE RESPONSE:**

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2. Darren has recently started going out with Farah. His friends, Joe and Ravi, want to know how far Darren has been, sexually, with her. Have they kissed, French kissed, gone all the way? Darren shrugs off their questions, but finally admits they haven't kissed yet. His friends tell him he's moving far too slowly. Farah will get bored if he doesn't start coming on stronger. Darren explains that he and Farah want to get to know each other more first, and that they have a good time just being friends. Joe and Ravi insist Darren is just shy, and that he has a lot to learn about dating.

**DARREN:** So maybe I am shy, but Farah doesn't seem to mind. I like to get to know a girl before I kiss her.

**JOE:** Your problem is that you've never kissed a girl. Look, I can give you some books and stuff to give you some ideas.

**DARREN'S ASSERTIVE RESPONSE:**

**RAVI:** Come on. You don't have to kid with us. You really want to do it, don't you? You just don't know how to get started.

**DARREN'S ASSERTIVE RESPONSE:**

**JOE:** Take it from me, pal. I've got more experience than you. You're missing out on half the fun.

**DARREN'S ASSERTIVE RESPONSE:**

**RAVI:** I'll bet Farah's wondering what's with you. Word will get out that Darren is a good little boy who does what his momma says and is scared to make it with a girl. You want that kind of reputation?

**DARREN'S ASSERTIVE RESPONSE:**

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3. Michiko invites Mike to a Sadie Hawkins school dance. He is flattered, since she is pretty and popular. He hasn't had all that much experience with girls. As they dance, Michiko holds him closely and rubs her hand up and down the back of his neck. They meet with a friend of Michiko—an older boy who has brought his date to the dance in his car. This couple is about to leave the dance, drive down to the beach, park the car, and "watch for submarines." They suggest that Michiko and Mike come with them, offering them the use of the back seat. Michiko accepts right away. Mike doesn't want to look too straight, but he feels very uneasy about the idea. He would feel more comfortable staying at the dance, and maybe getting to know Michiko better before they start anything heavy. Michiko tells him not to be so boring.

**MIKE:** Let's stay and dance some more. Things are just beginning to pick up.

**MICHIKO:** Ah, come on, Mike. This dance is boring. You and I can have more excitement in the car. Don't you want to?

**MIKE'S ASSERTIVE RESPONSE:**

**MICHIKO:** Hey, if you're shy, don't worry. It'll be dark.

**MIKE'S ASSERTIVE RESPONSE:**

**MICHIKO:** We'll be back before the dance is over. Don't be such a turkey. Live it up a little, Mike. You won't be sorry.

**MIKE'S ASSERTIVE RESPONSE:**

**MICHIKO:** I didn't think you were such a prude. I thought you were cool.

**MIKE'S ASSERTIVE RESPONSE:**



## APPENDIX C

### GENDER EQUITABLE INSTRUCTION APPENDIX

The following comments about the potential effectiveness of particular instructional strategies related to gender are based on current research about gender and education. Because most systemic, negative impacts of gender stereotyping have affected girls and women, the short-term emphasis of gender equity for the Ministry of Education relates primarily to female students. It is important that educators be aware that gender stereotypes are so deeply rooted in any society that they are virtually invisible to the society's members, unless a conscious effort is made to address them. Educators are encouraged to seek out resources that help to reveal stereotypes in student expectations, teacher-student interactions, and resource materials.

Generally, the use of a wider variety of strategies will meet the needs of a more diverse student body. Further information about instructional strategies that can enhance gender equitable teaching can be found in "Appendix C: Cross-Curricular Outlines" of the *Career and Personal Planning 8-12 Integrated Resource Package*.

### Instructional strategies

Carousel/gallery walks — allow teachers to learn about student interests, group dynamics, attitudes, stereotypes and knowledge. A sensitive instructor can use this knowledge to address several cross-curricular areas, such as gender-equity, in the fabric of any subject area. The structured rules built into this technique (e.g., structured brainstorming, nominative group technique) allow balanced participation. Research shows that a perceived gender-balance in discussions is usually more male participation based on quantitative analyses.

Case studies — will appeal to many female students for a variety of reasons: this strategy often encourages exploration of social and/or environmental impacts of decisions, it facilitates integrative thinking, and it allows use of communications skills. Particularly in small-group work, watch for stereotyped roles (e.g., a male student leads; a female student records).

Centres and co-operative learning — have potential benefits and drawbacks for female students. The co-operative or collaborative learning environment, small-group work, experience of abstract concepts in a concrete setting, hands-on techniques and relevance of material presented in this way will likely all be beneficial. Two things to watch are the relevance of the materials used in the centres, and the potential for competitiveness within the group. Relevance varies from individual to individual, and there can be gender-related patterns. A Physics concept might be equally well illustrated with a machine or a skeleton; boys might relate better to the former and girls to the latter. Competitiveness is most likely to be a problem when boys in the group are particularly knowledgeable about the materials or equipment provided (often in scientific or technical fields) and they may monopolize opportunities. Stereotypes can manifest themselves in assigned roles, (e.g., girls may be expected to be good "encouragers" and "observers").

**Debates** — will appeal to many female students because the overt focus is on presentation skills, which can be a catalyst to encourage research and problem-solving. Also, as with case studies, debates encourage divergent and integrative thinking. Direct competition among male and female students of this age group creates the risk of girls' rejecting academic achievement in favour of opportunities to be seen as non-threatening, pleasing or "feminine." Suggested evaluation techniques that reduce one-on-one competition may be helpful in this regard.

**Direct instruction** — may appear to be the most "gender-neutral" technique, but there are still areas in which research suggests the teacher should be vigilant. Several are listed below:

- it can be challenging to find strong female role models as examples of study or as guest speakers in classrooms
- overall, teachers interact with boys far more frequently than with girls
- teachers are four times more likely to call on a boy by name to answer a specific question
- high-achieving females receive the least amount of the teacher's attention,
- teachers allow longer wait times for males
- teachers ask girls lower-order questions
- responses directed toward girls are more likely to be simple acceptances, such as "okay" and "un-huh"
- when groups are separated into boys and girls, teachers spend more time close to the boys
- research has shown two consistent preferences: that teachers tend to prefer male students and believe that students prefer male teachers; as disturbing as these findings may be, such studies are reminders to be sensitive to potential biases in all areas of social equity.

**Field studies** — are sometimes used overtly to address gender issues. Some examples funded by the Gender Equity Program include the O'Keefe Ranch project, in which students studied women's contributions to history in a B.C. Interior community; and "Built Environments for Women," which looks at gender preferences and issues in urban planning, architectural and related fields. Field studies can also help female students to discover that subjects they have found challenging and relevant, for example, many girls enjoy life sciences and environmental studies, but feel they have no talent for mathematics or physical sciences. Integration of such subjects is natural in many field-study designs.

**Interviewing** — The skills needed for effective interview design and implementation are skills that help girls develop confidence and assertiveness. Students have the opportunity to recognize their opinions and questions are valid, the merits of open-ended questioning, that the equipment often used for interviews is not as difficult to use as they might have thought, that their work is of

interest to a wider audience than they may have assumed (interview results have been shared on Internet, through conferences and in community forums) and that they are capable of adding to the body of knowledge about a variety of topics through interview projects.

**Issues inquiry** — is likely to be especially popular with female students because they generally rank social and environmental responsibility as more important than do male students. Research in the area of violence-prevention suggests that appreciation of diverse viewpoints, empathy and resultant co-operation are teachable skills of benefit to some male students.

**Key visuals** — lend themselves to subject integration, which is popular with girls. Linear and spatial thinking are related; conceptual and graphic art skills are combined, as are elements of language arts representation and communication or equivalent skills from business-related secondary courses.

**Portfolios** — can have particular value to female students because of their potential to build self-esteem. Girls consistently underestimate their skills and abilities, regardless of quantitative measure of success. Girls are also more concerned than boys about potential problems of balancing personal and challenging career goals. Portfolios can help girls to realize that they have developed a range of relevant knowledge and skills worthy of presentation; they can also provide excellent bridges to actual or potential work experience.

**Reader response** — integrates several language arts curriculum components and potentially links with other curricular areas. When reviewing students' analysis of literature, be sensitive to gender-related perspectives. Literature review by women (e.g., Carol Gilligan, Susan Koppelman, Katherine Pope) often presents perspectives not found in men's reviews of the same material. Also be aware that students have sometimes used journals in order to share information about stressful circumstances in their lives; support systems for such disclosures should be regularly monitored and reinforced.

**Readers' theatre** — and other forms of theatre (story theatre, work from existing scripts and the development of original scripts) have tremendous potential to allow students to explore issues, perspectives and empathy while developing presentation skills of value in virtually any profession. Thoughtfully-crafted theatre has the dual benefits of experiential learning for the students and emotional impact for the audience. When students address social issues through theatre (e.g., for CAPP, Social Studies or Fine Arts), it is important to have professional support for both the technical aspects of drama and the emotional aspects of issues inquiry.

**Role play** — is typically much simpler than drama or simulations, but the same cautions apply. Role plays and debriefing are additional techniques to explore social and environmental impacts and contexts typically of more interest to girls than boys. If a role play script has room for improvisation, this can allow students to safely present perspectives or dilemmas of concern to them in an

objective or detached way. This type of strategy is likely to appeal to female students, as it facilitates understanding of a subject, as opposed to the memorization of facts about it.

**Self-directed, independent study** — will work well for some girls for several reasons. Such projects allow students to personalize their learning somewhat and incorporate values, perspectives and examples of interest to them. As with "Reader Response" be aware that male and female perspectives on what is important may vary. With self-directed learning, everyone tends to default to familiar and comfortable content, learning strategies and resource materials. Girls, who typically undervalue their skills and avoid unfamiliar challenges more than boys do, may need more encouragement and support to expand their horizons, e.g., to use a CD-ROM encyclopaedia rather than a hard copy; to use on-line information sources; or to apply mathematical skills to analysis of data.

**Technology** — is rapidly becoming an essential component of teaching and learning. Female students make relatively little use of technology, are less likely to tackle processes and skills they perceive as difficult, and are more likely to give up with such tasks if they encounter problems. At this stage in our educational evolution, when skilled and unskilled students form groups to explore technology, it is likely the skilled students will be male, and the unskilled students female. This combination can—if not managed—lead to reinforcement of stereotypes. This is one situation in which same-sex groups can be helpful. The Ministry of Education is currently funding research of teaching strategies to effect better participation of girls in this learning medium. Technology as a topic and a tool can be used to encourage male students' involvement and skill development in Language Arts activities.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **DATA RECORDING SHEETS**

## Data Recording Sheet (IRP)

**CAPP Resource Guide:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section and Page #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Quote:**

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<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>a) Stereotyping</b>		
i) example of	Yes / No / NA	
ii) acknowledges	Yes / No / NA	
<b>b) Accurate Statement</b>	Yes / No / NA	
<b>c) Provides a Context</b>	Yes / No / NA	
<b>d) Acknowledges Diversity</b>	Yes / No / NA	

**Other Comments:**

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(over)

**Data Recording Sheet**  
*Suggested Classroom Activities*

**CAPP Resource Guide:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section, Page # & Activity ID:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Activities' Purpose:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Learning Outcome(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

**References to Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Data Recording Sheet**  
**Suggested Classroom Activities Cont.**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>a) Activity relevant to Learning Outcome(s)</b>	Yes/ No/ NA	
<hr/>		
<b>b) Stereotyping</b>		
i) example of	Yes / No / NA	
ii) acknowledges	Yes / No / NA	
<hr/>		
<b>c) Provides a Context</b>	Yes / No / NA	
<hr/>		
<b>d) Acknowledges Diversity</b>	Yes / No / NA	
<hr/>		
<b>Comments:</b> <hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		

**Data Recording Sheet**  
**IRP Recommended Resources**

**CAPP Resource Guide:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix, Subheading and Page # :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Resource:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Resource:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Recommended for grade(s):** \_\_\_\_\_ **CAPP Component(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Year Recommended:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year Published:** \_\_\_\_\_

**References to Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
a) Relevant to Learning Outcomes	Yes/ No/ Na	
b) Relevant to Strategies for Instruction	Yes/ No/ NA	
c) Relevant to Assessment Strategies	Yes/ No/ NA	

## **APPENDIX E**

### **ANALYSIS OF INTERRELATIONSHIP WITHIN THE IRP**

### **PRESCRIBED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

To develop students' understanding of the role of the family and capacity for responsible decision making in their personal relationships.

*It is expected that students will:*

- identify stereotypical views of gender roles and responsibilities that exist within a family
- identify a variety of factors that influence family relationships
- evaluate the impact of peer, media, and social trends on decision making in their personal relationships
- outline the physical, social, and emotional changes associated with puberty
- identify and practise the skills necessary for communicating with family members
- relate family values and traditions to their own beliefs and behaviour standards

### **SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

- Have students share and discuss their own families' values and traditions.
- Have students compare models of the family from different cultures as portrayed in the news media, in film, and in literature.
- Have students use case studies to identify communication styles that help young people communicate with family members in a positive, caring way.
- Have students role-play situations in which they practise presenting their thoughts and opinions to their family members in a respectful, but assertive, manner.
- Have students create individual timelines, indicating the important events and changes in their lives. Then have them predict the changes that they expect to occur in the future. Have them differentiate between those changes that they have control over and those over which they have little or no control.
- Have students view current recommended video materials relating to changes during adolescence and then discuss the issues related to sexuality. Members of the local community may be of assistance with this topic, acting as guest speakers, providing resources, or acting as facilitators during discussions.
- Have students discuss the emotional changes associated with adolescence. Topics could include the types of emotions experienced in adolescence and how to express emotions in appropriate ways.
- Have students identify their families' values and traditions in their journals. Then have them discuss how these beliefs affect their behaviour standards.

## GRADE 8 • Personal Development (Family Life Education)

### SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

- Collect evidence of students' ability to:
  - list physical, social, emotional, and intellectual changes that occur during adolescence
  - identify current social trends from media resources, and from different times, cultures, and religions
  - show their awareness and acceptance of different family traditions and values in their discussions, comparisons, and reflections on videos or novels
- Look for evidence of students' ability to:
  - identify their own beliefs and values in relation to their families' values and traditions
  - listen and communicate respectfully
  - be receptive to the views and opinions of others
  - share appropriately with other group members

### SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Have students share and discuss their own families' values and traditions.
- Have students compare models of the family from different cultures as portrayed in the news media, in film, and in literature.
- Have students use case studies to identify communication styles that help young people communicate with family members in a positive, caring way.
- Have students role-play situations in which they practise presenting their thoughts and opinions to their family members in a respectful, but assertive, manner.
- Have students create individual timelines, indicating the important events and changes in their lives. Then have them predict the changes that they expect to occur in the future. Have them differentiate between those changes that they have control over and those over which they have little or no control.
- Have students view current recommended video materials relating to changes during adolescence and then discuss the issues related to sexuality. Members of the local community may be of assistance with this topic, acting as guest speakers, providing resources, or acting as facilitators during discussions.
- Have students discuss the emotional changes associated with adolescence. Topics could include the types of emotions experienced in adolescence and how to express emotions in appropriate ways.
- Have students identify their families' values and traditions in their journals. Then have them discuss how these beliefs affect their behaviour standards.