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A COMPARISON OF THE WAYS THAT TEACHERS,
PARENTS AND PRESCHOOL CHILDREN CLASSIFY TOYS
INTO GENDER CATEGORIES

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Teacher Education

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Linda Schneider

December 1994

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in partial fulfillment for the requirements
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Abstract

A COMPARISON OF THE WAYS THAT TEACHERS, PARENTS AND PRESCHOOL CHILDREN CLASSIFY TOYS INTO GENDER CATEGORIES

This study compared the ways that teachers, parents and children classified toys according to gender categories. Fifty-eight teachers and seventy-eight parents completed a toy survey in which they were to sort a list of 49 preschool classroom toys into gender categories. The six toys most often rated masculine and the six toys most often rated feminine by the teachers were used in a toy sorting task for preschool children. Seventy-four preschool children were asked to sort pictures of the twelve toys into gender categories.

One-way analyses of variance, t-tests, and Least Significant Difference multiple comparison procedures were used to examine parents' classifications of toys, comparisons between teachers' and children's classifications of toys, and children's classifications of toys as related to sex and age.

Results indicated that there were no significant differences between teachers' and children's classifications of toys as related to sex of children. There was, however, a significant difference between teachers' and children's classifications of toys as related to age. The three-year-old children disagreed more often with the teachers'

masculine and feminine ratings of the toys while the five-year-old children agreed more often with the teachers' masculine and feminine ratings of the toys. Analyses showed that the majority of parents classified toys into stereotypical categories of masculinity and femininity, whereas the majority of teachers classified more toys as neutral (a toy for either a boy or a girl). Data did indicate, however, that there was a substantial percentage of teachers who agreed with parents' masculine and feminine ratings of the toys. Results showed that there was not a significant disagreement between boys and girls on the masculine and feminine ratings of the toys. However, there was a difference in the way different age groups of children sorted the toys. The three-year-old children were less likely to classify the toys along stereotypical lines than were the five-year-old children.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLESviii, ix
CONTENTS OF APPENDICES	x
CHAPTER ONE.	1
Introduction and Background	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Research Questions.	3
Significance of the Problem	4
Assumptions and Limitations	5
Definition of Terms	6
Summary	7
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH AND LITERATURE	8
Theories of Sex-Role Development	8
Parents' Influence on Play Choices of Children	11
Teachers' Influence on Play Choices of Children	15
Toy Choices of Preschool Girls and Boys	16
Methods Used to Measure Toy Preferences of Young Children	17
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES	19
Introduction	19
Subjects	19
Instruments	20
Methods	23
The Scoring Procedure	25
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS	27
Data Analysis	27
Data Analysis by t-test	28
Data Analysis by Analysis of Variance and Least Significant Difference Multiple Comparison Procedure.	32
Masculine, Feminine, and Neutral Ratings of Toys by Sex and Age	41
Masculine, Feminine, and Neutral Ratings of Toys by Teachers, Parents and Children	54

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS.	. . .	61
Children's Toy Classifications.	. . .	61
Parents' Toy Classifications	. . .	63
Teachers' Toy Classifications	. . .	64
Further Study . . . . .	. . .	65
Recommendations . . . . .	. . .	67
REFERENCES .		68
APPENDIX A .		73
APPENDIX B .		77

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. SEX OF TEACHERS.	21
II. SEX OF CHILDREN.	. 21
III. AGE OF CHILDREN.	22
IV. SEX OF PARENTS . . . . .	. 22
V. T-TEST: Masculine Agreement Scores, Feminine Agreement Scores, Total Agreement Scores by Sex .	. 29
VI. T-TEST: Masculine Disagreement Scores, Feminine Disagreement Scores, Total Disagreement Scores by Sex .	. 30
VII. T-TEST: Number of Neutral Choices of Toys . .	. 31
VIII. ONE WAY ANOVA: Masculine Agreement Scores by Age	33
IX. ONE WAY ANOVA: Feminine Agreement Scores by Age	33
X. ONE WAY ANOVA: Total Agreement Scores by Age .	. 34
XI. LSD MULTIPLE COMPARISON PROCEDURE: Means For Total Agreement Scores by Age Groups . . . . .	. 35
XII. ONE WAY ANOVA: Masculine Disagreement Scores by Age . . . . .	. 37
XIII. LSD MULTIPLE COMPARISON PROCEDURE: Means For Masculine Disagreement Scores by Age Groups.	38
XIV. ONE WAY ANOVA: Feminine Disagreement Scores by Age . . . . .	. 39
XV. LSD MULTIPLE COMPARISON PROCEDURE: Means For Feminine Disagreement Scores by Age Groups . .	. 40
XVI. ONE WAY ANOVA: Total Disagreement Scores by Age Groups . . . . .	. 42

XVII.	LSD MULTIPLE COMPARISON PROCEDURE: Means For Total Disagreement Scores by Age Groups.	43
XVIII.	MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS OF MASCULINE TOYS BY SEX	45
XIX.	MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS OF MASCULINE TOYS BY AGE	46
XX.	MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS OF FEMININE TOYS BY SEX	50
XXI.	MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS OF FEMININE TOYS BY AGE	51
XXII.	MASCULINE, FEMININE AND NEUTRAL RATINGS OF FEMININE TOYS BY TEACHER, PARENT, AND CHILD.	55
XXIII.	MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS OF MASCULINE TOYS BY TEACHER, PARENT, AND CHILD	58

CONTENT FOR APPENDICES

	Page
APPENDIX A Preschool Classroom Toys Sorting Activity - Teachers. . .	73
APPENDIX B Preschool Classroom Toys Sorting Activity - Parents . . .	. 77

CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

Introduction and Background

There has been an abundance of research done in the area of gender issues and children. Preschool aged children are especially well represented in this research. The particular focus of gender related research has changed somewhat over the last few decades. Huston (1982) reports the following:

Before the women's movement in the 1970s, many studies were directed to aspects of masculinity for boys and femininity for girls because most people believed that acquisition of "appropriate" sex typing was essential for normal, healthy development. Theories and research were directed to learning how young boys could become masculine and young girls could become feminine (p. 3).

Although this belief is still prevalent today, it appears that the women's movement has caused a new focus of attention on the issue of early socialization of children into sex roles. Questions are being raised about the long term consequences of sex-role stereotyping and the stereotypical behaviors which children have been encouraged to acquire.

Sometime between ages two and three children learn to label themselves and others correctly as male or female (Leinbach and Fagot, 1986). Almost as soon as they can produce these labels, they know the sex stereotypes for toys, clothing, tools, household objects, games, and work

(Huston, 1983). In fact, research done by Fagot, Leinbach and O'Boyle (1992) indicates that children's acquisition of gender labels appears to accelerate the adoption of sex-typed behaviors.

Play with sex-stereotyped toys appears to be one of the earliest manifestations of sex-typing. By age three children show definite patterns of preferences for, and play with, toys socially stereotyped as appropriate for their own gender (O'Brien & Huston, 1985). Lewis (1991) found that sex-role stereotypes of toy play are often unconsciously supported by adults. Furthermore, she believes that this support for stereotypical play can have long lasting effects. She states, "Sex-typing of play styles, preferences, behaviour and expectations at the early childhood level, need to be recognised as having implications for the social and cognitive development of children that can affect their future skills, interests, career opportunities and aspirations" (p. 11).

Toys and the play behavior that accompany their use have been traditionally considered to be a major source of learning adult roles (Todd & Heffernan, 1964). Children's toys are believed to be not only a source of enjoyment, but also a vehicle for social and cognitive learning. When play choices of young children are constricted to traditional sex-role stereotypes, there may be negative consequences for the development of the child.

With a new awareness of the potentially harmful effects of the stereotyping of toy play and the potentially beneficial effects of removing sex-typed labels, it is important that parents and teachers consider what responsibility they have in eliminating sex-role stereotyping in young children's play.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purposes of this study are (a) to examine how teachers and parents classify a list of preschool classroom toys into gender categories; (b) to identify the toys which teachers most frequently classified as masculine and feminine; and, (c) to examine how preschool children sort photographs of these toys into gender categories.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the present study the following questions were proposed to examine how teachers and parents classify preschool classroom toys into gender categories; and how preschool children sort toys into gender categories:

1. Is there a difference between the ways that teachers, parents, and children classify selected preschool classroom toys into gender categories?
2. Does sex have an effect on how children sort selected preschool classroom toys into gender categories?

3. Does age have an effect on how children sort selected preschool classroom toys into gender categories?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

A great deal of research over the last few decades suggests that sex-role stereotyping, when applied to young children, may have negative long term consequences. However, in spite of this information, recent research indicates that there has been little change in the sex stereotypical play patterns of young children in the home and school environments. The early play preferences of young children help the child organize both the cognitive and the social world. When influences such as sex-role stereotyping inhibit these preferences, the effects on the child's overall development can be serious and long lasting.

It is clear that children begin to develop stereotyped ideas about sex roles before they enter a school setting. The home environment is the primary determining factor of children's sex stereotypical play styles. Parents are usually products of traditional sex-typed socialization processes. They often unconsciously direct their children toward gender specific behavior. Sex-role stereotypes are also commonly found in children's play behavior in early childhood school settings. The adults in these settings frequently support these stereotypes as they interact with children during their play.

If the individual differences and abilities of children are to be nurtured and developed, and not constricted by traditional sex-role stereotypes based on biological and physiological differences, then parents and teachers must work towards the removal of stereotypical beliefs and attitudes about sex roles.

Today's society is characterized by stereotypical attitudes and practices. It is important that researchers continue to provide information about the negative impact of these attitudes and practices on the cognitive and social development of young children.

ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

For the purpose of this study the following assumptions were made:

1. It was assumed that all adults surveyed in this study were familiar with the toys named on the toy list.
2. It was assumed that the children surveyed in this study were able to identify all of the toys in the toy pictures.
3. When working with very young children (three-, four-, and five-year-olds), it can only be assumed that they understood the directions of the test; and that, in spite of a short attention span, they finished the test, and that they finished the test in a manner consistent with the way they started it.

For the purpose of this study the following limitations were made:

1. Only two grade levels of teachers (preschool and kindergarten) were used to develop the toy list.
2. As a result of limiting the study to only preschool and kindergarten teachers, the teachers surveyed were predominantly female.
3. Only three-, four-, and five-year-old children were evaluated in this study.
4. This study was limited to an evaluation of preschool classroom toys only.
5. Only Head Start preschool children were evaluated in this study.
6. Because of the small size of the sample, generalizations to other populations may not be easily made. Implications may however be drawn for other groups of teachers, parents and children who are similar to those of the sample.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Gender Identity. The term is defined as an awareness of individuals (oneself or others) as male or female (ERIC, 1982).

Sex Role. The term is defined as a pattern of attitudes and behavior that in any society is deemed appropriate to one sex rather than the other (ERIC, 1982).

Sex Role Development, or Sex Typing. The term is defined as the process by which children come to adopt the attitudes, feelings, behaviors, and motives that are culturally defined as appropriate for their sex (ERIC, 1982) .

Sex Stereotypes. The term is defined as rigid or biased attitudes in which persons are ascribed certain traits because of their sex (ERIC, 1982) .

Summary

When play choices of young children are constricted to traditional sex-role stereotypes, there may be negative consequences for the development of the child. This study investigates the way that parents, teachers, and children classify toys according to gender preferences. A review of related literature in this area will follow.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

Chapter Two will review research and literature dealing with the area of gender issues and children. The review will begin with a discussion of two theories of sex-role development. The role of parents and teachers as influencing agents in stereotypical toy choices of children will follow. The final section will focus on previous research about sex-stereotypical toy preferences of young children and the methods of sorting tasks that researchers used to measure toy preferences.

Theories of Sex-Role Development

How do children categorize themselves as a member of one sex or the other? How do they learn the roles and the implications of gender identity and behavior? Considerable controversy surrounds the issue of how young children learn about sex differences and sex roles. There are two prominent theories of sex role development--social learning theory and cognitive-developmental theory. According to these views, sex-typing results, in part, from children's attempts to match their behavior to mental standards, or stereotypes, of sex-appropriate behavior (Perry, White, Perry, 1984). According to both theories, children acquire mental conceptions of appropriate behavior for each sex mainly by observing the actions of males and females and by

encoding into memory certain activities as male-appropriate and other activities as female-appropriate. Children are then believed to adopt as their own preferences the behaviors that they have encoded as appropriate for their own sex (Perry et al, 1984).

Both social learning theory and cognitive-developmental theory assign importance to the role of self-socialization in sex-role development (children's attempts to imitate behavior that they have discerned to be appropriate for their sex). However, the two theories differ in the degree to which they rely on this process to explain the very earliest manifestations of sex-typed behavior (Perry et al, 1984).

X According to Mischel's social learning theory (Mischel, 1966), children initially acquire sex-typed behaviors as a function of reinforcement and modeling; only later do they realize that they are boys or girls and that certain behaviors are expected with each sex. X Children then learn to display behaviors associated with their own sex role and inhibit behaviors associated with the opposite sex role. Thus, for the social learning theorist, gender identity and sex-role stereotypes are outcomes of the developmental process.

In contrast, the cognitive theorists believe that gender identity and sex-role stereotypes are preliminary and causal factors in the acquisition of sex-typed behavior

(Weinraub et al, 1984). While recognizing that the process of reinforcement and imitation of models may be necessary for the acquisition of sex-typed behavior, cognitive developmental theorist Lawrence Kohlberg (1966) proposes that they are not sufficient. The cognitive developmental theory stresses the significance of cognitive growth as an organizer of various sex-role behaviors. A child uses his thought processes as he integrates his understanding of sexual identity with his understanding of the content of sex roles prescribed by the culture around him to make appropriate behavioral choices. According to this theory, children correctly apply gender labels to themselves and others as early as three years of age. Gender constancy is established between the ages of four and eight when children begin to understand that gender is constant regardless of superficial transformations, such as in dress and appearance (Kohlberg, 1966; Slaby & Frey, 1975).

It has been hypothesized that the development of gender constancy is associated with sex-typed toy preferences (Smetana, Letourneau, 1984). That is, as soon as children can correctly identify themselves as males or females, they begin to value activities that are consistent with their gender identity. The exact relationship between gender constancy and gender-typed toy choice is unclear, however. Contradictory findings are reported by studies in this area. Some studies found no relation between gender-typed toy

choice and gender constancy (Marcus & Overton, 1978; Smetana & Letourneau, 1984), whereas others found that gender constancy was positively related to same-gender toy preference (Stangor & Ruble, 1989).

Parents' Influence on Play Choices of Children

For many years, developmental psychologists and educators have recognized the role of parents and teachers as primary forces in the development of sex roles in children. Studies show that sex-typed play patterns are established and maintained in both the home and school environment (Fagot, Leinbach, & O'Boyle, 1992; Fagot & Hagan, 1991; Etaugh & Liss, 1992; Oettingen, 1985; Serbin, Connor, & Citron, 1981; Langlois & Downs, 1980).

In the home environment parents are considered to be the primary socialization agents for sex-role development of young children (Brooks-Gunn & Matthews, 1979; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). Block (1979) summarized the results of six studies in which the self-described child-rearing orientations of mothers and fathers were compared. The overall conclusions provide evidence: (1) that parents treat sons and daughters differently and have different expectations for each; (2) that differences in parent-child interactions are due to sex of parent and sex of child; (3) that parents expect children to more rigidly conform to standards of sex-role behavior as they get older; and, (4) that many sex-related socialization values of mothers and

fathers appear relatively consistent across socioeconomic levels, educational levels, and cultural backgrounds.

Research shows that parents tend to reward gender-typical play and punish gender-atypical play in their children. For example, parents have been found to support active large motor play in boys, but to discourage such active play in girls (Fagot, 1978). Similarly, Langlois and Downs (1980) found that parents rewarded their daughters for playing with doll houses and domestic toys but punished them for playing with military toys and vehicles. Boys, on the other hand, were rewarded by their fathers for engaging in play with military toys and vehicles and were punished for playing with doll houses and domestic toys. ✕ The reward methods that were used by parents consisted of praise, affection, and help; while the punitive methods consisted of ridicule, ignoring, and withdrawal. ✕

✕ Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) found that both mothers and fathers chose more sex-typed activities for boys than they did for girls. Both parents much more strongly discouraged cross-sex play in sons than daughters. ✕ Furthermore, the authors reported that fathers play an especially active role in guiding their sons away from "sissy" play behavior while encouraging the development of femininity in their daughters.

✕ It can be hypothesized that parents are not fully aware of the methods they use to socialize their young children

toward sex-typed toy choices.^X Fagot (1978) found that highly educated young parents subtly encouraged their two-year-old children to play with gender-stereotyped toys, even though the parents reported that they did not encourage sex-stereotyped play. A study done by Caldera, Huston, & O'Brien (1989) examined parents' verbal behaviors, levels of involvement, and proximity to the child, in relation to toy play. When the child was engaged in same-sex play rather than cross-sex play it was found that parents responded with positive verbal interactions such as praise, comments, and questions; parents were also more involved in their child's play, and maintained a closer proximity to the child.

In order to determine to what extent parents actively support the development of sex-typed activities and interests with toys, Rheingold and Cook (1975) examined the content of children's bedrooms. They found that boys' bedrooms contained significantly more vehicles, military toys, education/art toys, machines, and sports equipment. Girls' rooms were found to contain significantly more dolls, dollhouses, and domestic items; their rooms tended to be decorated with more floral motifs, lace, fringe, and ruffles. The researchers concluded that parents are providing their children with toys and bedroom furnishings that encourage sex-stereotyped activities (Robinson & Morris, 1986).

Parents also encourage sex-typed play when they select toys as gifts for their children. Parents are likely to buy toys such as dolls or toy dishes for their daughters and trucks and tool sets for their sons. Whether these toy choices occur because the parents are responding to already developed preferences expressed by the children, or whether their purchases precede and guide the development of such preferences is not known--it is likely that the influence works in both directions (Robinson & Morris, 1986).

✕ A study by Block (1983) found that boys are given a greater variety of toys than girls, and that there are important differences in the kinds of toys that are provided for boys and girls. ✕ Boys' toys, more than girls' toys, afford inventive possibilities, encourage manipulation, and provide more explicit feedback from the physical world. ✕ Girls' toys, on the other hand, tend to encourage imitation, are more often used in proximity to the caretaker, and provide less opportunity for variation and innovation. ✕ There are developmental implications in these differences in toy preference and availability. Block states, ✕ "Differential exposure to toys with dissimilar characteristics predisposes toward different play and problem solving experiences for boys and for girls, experiences which may have implications for later cognitive development" (p. 1342). ✕

Teachers' Influence on Play Choices of Children

A number of studies have investigated how teachers influence the toy choices and play styles of young children.

✧ Regarding toy choice, teachers appear to spend more time with children engaged in female sex-typed activities, such as fine motor crafts or doll and kitchen play, than with children engaged in male sex-typed activities such as block or truck play (Serbin et al, 1981) ✧ Research done by Oettingen (1985) reports that the teacher's presence in an activity center not only has an effect on the activities which boys and girls choose, but also on their frequency of participation in play groups. It was found that when the teacher was not in the play area the boys engaged significantly more than girls in constructive play and rough and tumble play, whereas the girls engaged more in art. In contrast, when the teacher was present, her influence drew boys and to a lesser extent girls from constructive play into art, thereby obscuring boys' preference for constructive play and girls' for art. Fagot (1984) examined children's play styles in relation to teacher reaction. She found that children who preferred to play at tasks quietly received positive teacher feedback, while children who engaged in active motor play received negative teacher reactions.

Toy Choices of Preschool Girls and Boys

There is extensive documentation of sex differences in preschool toy preference and play styles, and the differences have not really changed over the last 20 years (Fagot, 1984). Girls engage in more doll play and domestic rehearsal, more art activities, and more dressing up than boys do. Boys play more with transportation toys, with blocks, and with carpentry toys than girls do. Boys also engage in more aggressive activities and play more in larger peer groups. Girls spend more time talking and spend far more time with teachers than do boys. As they grow older, both boys and girls increasingly spend more time in same-sex play groups (Fagot, 1985).

In a 1980 study, Frasher, Nurss, and Brogan examined 12 toys that were designated as sex-typed or neutral in studies done in 1950 and 1963. The feminine toys were a small baby doll, plastic high-heeled shoes, a purse, and a small set of dishes. The masculine toys included a fire engine, a plastic tool set, a racing car, and an airplane. The sex neutral toys were a wooden puzzle, a plastic ball, a telephone, and Play-Doh. The results of this study indicated that toy preferences were as rigidly stereotyped by sex in 1980 as they were in previous decades.

Another indication that sex-stereotypical toy selections is a common parental practice may be found in a study done by Robinson and Morris (1986). They studied the

nature of Christmas toys for preschool children. It was reported that boys received gender specific toys such as action figures, occupational-role toys, weapons, and vehicles. Girls received gender specific toys such as arts/crafts, dolls, doll accessories, and domestic toys.

Methods Used To Measure Toy Preferences of Young Children

Toy preference tasks generally involve the use of a predetermined set of toys and the child is asked to sort the toys according to gender categories of masculinity, femininity, or neutral preferences. Often pictures of toys rather than real toys are used for this procedure. For example, Perry et al, (1984) asked children to sort toy pictures according to which toy or activity they thought children in a photograph would prefer. De Lucia (1963) used black and white photographs of toys and a drawing of a girl or a boy. The children were asked which one of the two toys the child would like to play with. A similar study by Blakemore, La Rue, and Olejnik (1979) used a set of 24 pairs of black and white pictures of toys. Each pair consisted of a strongly masculine and strongly feminine toy. The subjects, two-, four-, and six-year-old children, were asked to select the one toy picture of the pair that they liked best. They were then asked to sort 12 pictures into piles of boys' and girls' toys. When toy preferences were examined it was found that cognition may well play a role in sex-role development as sex-appropriate toy preferences were

quite strong among those children who were cognitively advanced enough to understand the sex-role dimension of toys. It was also found that two-year-old boys preferred boys' toys, while girls of the same age showed no preferences for girls' toys.

The results of a toy preference study done by Eisenberg (1982) indicated that three- and four-year-old children use sex-typed considerations when choosing toys for other children. However, when making toy choices for themselves their choices were seldom based on sex-typed reasoning. Instead they tended to choose toys for themselves based primarily on what the toy could do.

Research indicates that young children learn about sex-role behavior through a combination of cognitive and social developmental processes (O'Brien & Huston, 1985). There is evidence that sex-role behavior is influenced by both parents and teachers, and that stereotypical play patterns of young children still exist today in both the home and school environments (Langlois & Downs, 1980; Serbin, Connor, Citron, 1981).

A study which investigates how teachers and parents classify preschool classroom toys into gender categories is indicated.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This chapter will describe the methodology and procedures used. A survey method was used to collect data from parents and teachers about gender classifications of preschool classroom toys. Preschool children were involved in a sorting task of pictures of toys. The study describes how parents, teachers, and children classified toys according to perceived gender categories.

Subjects

Participants in this study were (1) teachers, (2) preschool children, and (3) parents.

Teachers. The teachers included in this study were chosen by a professor of early childhood education at a local university using the following criteria: (a) presently teaching in preschool or kindergarten, (b) a minimum of two years of teaching experience at the preschool or kindergarten level, (c) enrollment in a minimum of one early childhood course at the local university within the last three years. Fifty-eight teachers (55 females, 3 males) participated in the study, a return rate of 89%. (See Table I.)

Children. The preschool children who participated in the study were children currently enrolled in one of four

Head Start classrooms. A total of 74 children--43 boys and 31 girls participated in the study. There were 10 three-year-old, 37 four-year-olds, and 27 five-year-olds. (See Table II, Table III.)

Parents. The parents who participated in the study were parents of the preschool children just described. A total of 78 parents (57 mothers, 21 fathers) participated in the study. Of the 78 surveys returned, 48 surveys came from one parent in a family, and 30 surveys came from both parents in a family (15 mothers, 15 fathers). Sixty-three of the 70 families in the Head Start Program participated in this study, a return rate of 90%. (See Table IV.)

Instruments

A list of 49 toys commonly found in preschool classrooms was developed. Toys to be included on the list were selected by the researcher based on her 15 years of preschool teaching experience in two preschool classrooms, observations in other preschools, a review of preschool equipment catalogs, and visits to local early childhood supply stores. The toys chosen were representative of a wide variety of toys found in preschool classrooms throughout the area. They were toys that were easily recognizable by preschool age children as well as toys that were popular and used regularly by preschool age children.

Survey. To investigate teachers' and parents' views about gender classifications of these toys, a survey was

TABLE I
SEX OF TEACHERS

<u>Sex</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u> - of total number of teachers
Male	3	5
Female	<u>55</u>	95

n = 58

TABLE II
SEX OF CHILDREN

<u>Sex</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u> - of total number of children
Male	43	58
Female	<u>31</u>	42

n = 74

TABLE III

AGE OF CHILDREN

<u>Age</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>% - of total number of children</u>
3-year-olds	10	13.5
4-year-olds	37	50.0
5-year-olds	<u>27</u>	36.5

n = 74

TABLE IV

SEX OF PARENTS

<u>Sex</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>% - of total number of parents</u>
Male	21	27
Female	<u>57</u>	73

n = 78

developed. The survey consisted of an alphabetical listing of the 49 toys and a Likert-type scale with categories of strictly masculine, somewhat masculine, neutral, somewhat feminine, and strictly feminine. Respondents were asked to circle the category of gender identity that they felt was the most appropriate rating for each toy.

Methods

The teacher surveys were mailed to 65 teachers. A stamped addressed envelope was included with each survey so that they could be returned to the researcher by mail. The parent surveys were sent home from school with the children. Each of the 74 children in the four Head Start classrooms was given an envelope containing one or two surveys depending on whether it was a single or a two-parent family. After a ten day period a second copy of the survey was sent home with each child. Both the teacher surveys and the parent surveys were sent out and returned within a three week period of time.

When the teacher surveys were returned they were analyzed by the researcher to establish which were the six toys rated most often as masculine, and which were the six toys rated most often as feminine. These six masculine and six feminine toys comprised a list of 12 toys that would be used in a sorting task with the children.

Colored photographs were taken of each of the 12 toys. The photos were put in random order and numbered 1-12 to

establish a permanent order for the sorting task. Also used in the sorting task were three baskets with a catalog picture on each basket. On one basket there was a picture of boys, on one basket a picture of girls, and on the third basket a picture of a boy and a girl.

Child Sorting Task. The sorting task was located on a table in the classroom. The sorting baskets were placed on the table in front of each child in the same order for all children--on the left the basket with the picture of the girls, in the middle the basket with the picture of both a boy and a girl, and on the right the basket with the picture of the boys. The sorting task was administered by the researcher. The following directions were given to each child:

"Here are three baskets. On this basket there is a picture of girls, on this basket there is a picture of boys, and on this basket there is a picture of both a girl and a boy. I have some pictures of toys and I would like you to decide if each toy is for girls to play with, for boys to play with, or if it is a toy for both girls and boys to play with. If it is a toy for girls you will put the picture in this basket, if it is a toy for boys you will put the picture in this basket, if it is a toy for both girls and boys you will put the picture in this basket." As picture number 1 was handed to the child the directions were continued, "This is a picture of a tea set, where would you like to put it?" If the child seemed unsure of the directions there were repeated--"Is the tea set a toy for girls to play with, a toy for boys to play with, or a toy for both girls and boys to play with?"

The pictures were handed to the child one at a time and each toy was named by the researcher as the picture was

given to the child. The pictures numbered 1-12 were given to each child in that same order. The children participated in the sorting task one at a time, and other children were not allowed to observe. The sorting task took each child approximately three minutes to complete and for the entire sample of children took place over a two week period of time.

The Scoring Procedure

Of the 65 teacher surveys mailed out, 58 were returned. They were analyzed to see which were the six toys rated most often as masculine, and which were the six toys rated most often as feminine. These masculine and feminine toys made a toy list of twelve toys which was analyzed in the following manner:

1. Comparisons were made between children's and teachers' gender classifications of the six masculine and six feminine toys.
2. Comparisons were made between teachers', parents', and children's gender classifications of the six masculine and six feminine toys.
3. Comparisons were made between age groups of children and the ways in which they sorted the six masculine and six feminine toys.
4. Comparisons were made between the ways in which boys and girls sorted the six masculine and six feminine toys.

Scoring the Children's Sorting Task

The results of the children's sorting task were further analyzed to include how often each child sorted a masculine toy as masculine and a feminine toy as feminine, compared to how often he/she sorted a masculine toy as feminine or neutral, or a feminine toy as masculine or neutral. On each child's observation record from the sorting task, points were given on a scale of zero to six for each child's masculine and feminine classifications of the photographs of the 12 toys. For each masculine toy that was sorted as masculine one point was given. This was called the masculine agreement score (MAS). For each feminine toy that was sorted as feminine one point was given. This was called the feminine agreement score (FAS). The sum of the MAS and FAS scores constituted the total agreement scores (TAS). For each feminine toy that was sorted as masculine one point was given. This was called the masculine disagreement score (MDS). For each masculine toy that was sorted as feminine one point was given. This was called the feminine disagreement score (FDS). The sum of the MDS and the FDS scores constituted the total disagreement scores (TDS). For each toy that was sorted as neutral one point was given. This was called the N score. Each observation record contained a total MAS score, a total FAS score, a total MDS score, a total FDS score, and a total N score.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Data Analysis

Analysis of the teacher surveys showed that the six toys rated most often as masculine were: dump truck, cars, airplane, fire truck, gas station, and train set. The six toys rated most often as feminine were: purse, doll house, cradle, baby doll, tea set, and high chair. With the exception of the above mentioned analysis, all data analysis was performed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, (SPSS-X User Guide, 3rd ed.) Chicago: SPSS, Inc., 1988 on the University of Nebraska at Omaha VAX mainframe computer. The SPSS-X programs T-TESTS, CROSSTABS, and ONE WAY ANOVA with the Least Significant Difference multiple comparison procedure (LSD) were used for data analysis. The analyses related to the research questions proposed in Chapter 1 were organized as follows:

1. Is there a difference between the ways that teachers, parents and children classify selected preschool classroom toys into gender categories?

Questions concerning the degree of agreement and disagreement between teachers', children's and parents' gender classifications of the six masculine and six feminine toys were addressed using t-tests. Data were cross-tabulated to organize and display information.

2. Does sex have an effect of how children sort selected preschool classroom toys into gender categories?

Questions concerning the effect of sex on how children sorted the toys were addressed using t-tests.

3. Does age have an effect on how children sort selected preschool classroom toys into gender categories?

Questions concerning the effect of age on how children sorted the toys were addressed using one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA), and the Least Significant Difference multiple comparison procedure.

Data Analyses By T-Test. T-tests were performed to analyze the following scores: Masculine Agreement Score (MAS), Feminine Agreement Score (FAS), Total Agreement Score (TAS), Masculine Disagreement Score (MDS), Feminine Disagreement Score (FDS), Total Disagreement Score (TDS). Sex was used as the independent variable for each t-test. Results were as follows: MAS ($t_{(72)} = 1.31$, $p = .196$), FAS ($t_{(71)} = .53$, $p = .598$), TAS ($t_{(72)} = 1.00$, $p = .322$) (See Table V); MDS ($t_{(72)} = 1.10$, $p = .274$), FDS ($t_{(71)} = -.31$, $p = .769$), TDS ($t_{(72)} = .49$, $p = .626$) (See Table VI).

A t-test was also used to compare the number of neutral choices of toys between the boys and the girls. This difference was not significant ($t_{(72)} = -1.42$, $p = .161$) (See Table VII).

In summary, the results of the above tests indicated that there were no significant differences between boys' and

TABLE V

T-TEST: Masculine Agreement Scores (MAS), Feminine Agreement Scores (FAS), Total Agreement Scores (TAS),
by Sex

Variable	d.f.	t-value	prob
MAS	72	1.31	.196 (n.s.)
FAS	71	.53	.598 (n.s.)
TAS	72	1.00	.322 (n.s.)

TABLE VI

T-TEST: Masculine Disagreement Scores (MDS), Feminine Disagreement Scores (FDS), Total Disagreement Scores (TDS),
by Sex of Child

Variable	d.f.	t-value	prob
MDS	72	1.10	.274 (n.s.)
FDS	71	-.31	.759 (n.s.)
TDS	72	.49	.626 (n.s.)

TABLE VII

t-test: Number of Neutral Choices of Toys

Variable	d.f.	t-value	prob
Number of Neutral Toy Choices	72	-1.42	.161 (n.s.)

girls' gender classifications of the twelve toys on the toy list as compared to teachers' gender classifications of the twelve toys on the toy list.

Data Analyses by Analysis of Variance and Least Significant Difference Multiple Comparison Procedure. One-way analyses of variance (ANOVA), followed by Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison procedures were performed on MAS, FAS, TAS, MDS, FDS, and TDS using age as the independent variable. When MAS was examined by age group, the one-way ANOVA showed no significant difference ($F_{(2, 71)} = 1.168$; n.s.). Likewise, when FAS was examined by age group, the one-way ANOVA showed no significant difference ($F_{(2, 70)} = .7119$; n.s.) (See Tables VIII, IX).

When TAS (Total Agreement Score) was examined by age group, the one-way ANOVA showed a nearly significant difference ($F_{(2, 71)} = 2.665$; $p. = .0766$) (See Table X). The LSD

multiple comparison procedure showed a significant difference between the oldest (five-year-olds) and the youngest (three-year-olds) groups, ($p < .05$) indicating that older children more than younger children sorted the toys along stereotypical lines (See Table XI).

TABLE VIII
ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: Masculine Agreement Scores
(MAS) by Age

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	F-prob
Between Groups	2	724.905	1.168	.3169
Within Groups	71	620.597		
Total	73			

TABLE IX
ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: Feminine Agreement Scores
(FAS) by Age

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	F-prob
Between Groups	2	441.506	.711	.4943
Within Groups	70	620.222		
Total	72			

TABLE X
ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: Total Agreement Scores (TAS)
by Age

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	F-prob
Between Groups	2	1258.503	2.665	.0766
Within Groups	71	472.215		
Total	73			

TABLE XI

LSD MULTIPLE COMPARISON PROCEDURE: Means for Total
Agreement Scores (TAS) by Age Groups

Group	3-yr.-olds	4-yr.-olds	5-yr.-olds
3-year-olds (x = 58.205)			
4-year-olds (x = 64.865)	n.s.		
5-year-olds (x = 74.691)	*	n.s.	

(* = significant at $p < .05$ level)

When MDS (Masculine Disagreement Score) was examined by age group, the one-way ANOVA showed a significant between group effect ($F_{(2, 71)} = 10.997; p. < .0001$) (See Table XII).

The LSD procedure showed significant differences between three-year-olds and four-year-olds, between three-year-olds and five-year-olds, and between four-year-olds and five-year-olds. The LSD procedure revealed that the three-year-old children indicated the most disagreement with the teachers' masculine classifications of the toys. The five-year-old children indicated the most agreement with the teachers' masculine classifications of the toys (See Table XIII).

When FDS (Feminine Disagreement Score) was examined by age group, the one-way ANOVA showed a nearly significant difference ($F_{(2, 70)} = 2.476; p. = .0913$) (See Table XIV). The

LSD procedure indicated a significant difference between the three-year-olds and the five-year-olds. The LSD procedure revealed that the three-year-old children indicated the most disagreement with the teachers' feminine classifications of the toys. The three-year-old children and the four-year-old children concurred closely with each other here (See Table XV).

When TDS (Total Disagreement Score) was examined by age group the one-way ANOVA showed a very significant between

TABLE XII
ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: Masculine Disagreement
Scores (MDS) by Age

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	F-prob
Between Groups	2	1211.996	10.996	.0001
Within Groups	71	110.213		
Total	73			

TABLE XIII

LSD MULTIPLE COMPARISON PROCEDURE: Means for Masculine
Disagreement Scores (MDS) by Age Groups

Group	3-yr.-olds	4-yr.-olds	5-yr.-olds
3-year-olds (x = 18.377)		*	*
4-year-olds (x = 7.670)			*
5-year-olds (x = .529)			

(* = significant at $p < .05$ level)

TABLE XIV
ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: Feminine Disagreement
Scores (FDS) by Age

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	F-prob
Between Groups	2	186.915	2.477	.0913
Within Groups	70	75.444		
Total	72			

TABLE XV

LSD MULTIPLE COMPARISON PROCEDURE: Means for Feminine
Disagreement Scores (FDS) by Age Groups

Group	3-yr.-olds	4-yr.-olds	5-yr.-olds
3-year-olds (x = 6.848)		n.s.	n.s.
4-year-olds (x = 6.152)			*
5-year-olds (x = 1.623)			

(* = significant at $p < .05$ level)

groups difference ($F_{(2, 71)} = 9.574; p. = .0002$) (See Table

XVI). The LSD procedure indicated a significant difference between three-year-olds and four-year-olds, between three-year-olds and five-year-olds, and between four-year-olds and five-year-olds. The LSD procedure revealed that the three-year-old children indicated the most disagreement with the teachers' classifications of the masculine and feminine toys combined. The five-year-old children indicated the most agreement with the teachers' classifications of the masculine and feminine toys combined (See Table XVII).

When the one-way ANOVA and the LSD procedure were used to compare the number of neutral choices of toys between the age groups of children, the results indicated that no two groups were significantly different ($F_{2, 71} = .1212; n.s.$).

In summary, results indicated that there were significant differences in masculine and feminine classifications of toys between age groups of children. There were no significant differences in neutral classifications of toys between age groups of children.

Masculine, Feminine, and Neutral Ratings of Toys by Sex and Age

The following information pertains to children's ratings of the masculine and feminine toys that were

TABLE XVI
ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: Total Disagreement
Scores (TDS) by Age Groups

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	F-prob
Between Groups	2	1087.295	9.574	.0002
Within Groups	71	113.565		
Total	73			

TABLE XVII

LSD MULTIPLE COMPARISON PROCEDURE: Means for Total
Disagreement Scores (TDS) by Age Groups

Group	3-yr.-olds	4-yr.-olds	5-yr.-olds
3-year-olds (x = 18.141)		*	*
4-year-olds (x = 9.009)			*
5-year-olds (x = 1.543)			

(* = significant at $p < .05$ level)

selected by the teachers. The six masculine toys will be considered first, followed by the six feminine toys.

Masculine Toys. Information about masculine toys as related to sex and age of children is found in Tables XVIII, XIX.

Dump Truck

A majority of boys (72%) classified the dump truck as a masculine toy. This compares to a masculine classification of slightly more than half by the girls (52%). A large percentage of the girls (42%) felt that the dump truck was a neutral toy.

The dump truck was rated as a masculine toy across all age levels of children. No meaningful difference between the age levels of children was noticed. Sixty percent of the three-year-old children, 65% of the four-year-old children, and 63% of the five-year-old children rated the dump truck masculine.

Cars

The cars were categorized as a masculine toy by 79% of the boys, whereas only 52% of the girls placed the cars in a masculine category; 36% of the girls categorized cars as a neutral toy.

Sixty percent of the three-year-olds, 65% of four-year-olds, and 74% of five-year-olds felt that the cars were masculine.

TABLE XVIII
MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS
OF MASCULINE TOYS BY SEX

<u>TOY</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>SEX OF CHILD</u>	
		<u>MALE</u> (n=43)	<u>FEMALE</u> (n=31)
DUMP TRUCK	Masculine	72.1%	51.6%
	Feminine	2.3	6.5
	Neutral	25.6	41.9
CARS	Masculine	79.1	51.6
	Feminine	7.0	12.9
	Neutral	14.0	35.5
AIRPLANE	Masculine	81.4	77.4
	Feminine	2.3	3.2
	Neutral	16.3	19.4
FIRE TRUCK	Masculine	62.8	54.8
	Feminine	9.3	6.5
	Neutral	27.9	38.7
GAS STATION	Masculine	72.1	61.3
	Feminine	7.0	9.7
	Neutral	20.9	29.0
TRAIN SET	Masculine	67.4	51.6
	Feminine	4.7	3.2
	Neutral	27.9	45.2

TABLE XIX
MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS
OF MASCULINE TOYS BY AGE

<u>TOY</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>AGE OF CHILD</u>		
		<u>3-yr.-olds</u> (n=10)	<u>4-yr.-olds</u> (n=37)	<u>5-yr.-olds</u> (n=27)
DUMP TRUCK	Masculine	60.0%	64.9%	63.0%
	Feminine	0	8.1	0
	Neutral	40.0	27.0	37.0
CARS	Masculine	60.0	64.9	74.1
	Feminine	10.0	10.8	7.4
	Neutral	30.0	24.3	18.5
AIRPLANE	Masculine	90.0	73.0	85.2
	Feminine	0	5.4	0
	Neutral	10.0	21.6	14.8
FIRE TRUCK	Masculine	30.0	56.8	74.1
	Feminine	30.0	5.4	3.7
	Neutral	40.0	37.8	22.2
GAS STATION	Masculine	80.0	70.3	59.3
	Feminine	0	13.5	3.7
	Neutral	20.0	16.2	37.0
TRAIN SET	Masculine	80.0	62.2	51.9
	Feminine	10.0	5.4	0
	Neutral	10.0	32.4	48.1

Airplane

A large percentage of both boys and girls rated the airplane as a masculine toy (81% boys, 77% girls). Likewise, a large percentage of three-year-old, four-year-old, and five-year-old children rated the airplane as a masculine toy (90%, 73%, 85%, respectively).

Fire Truck

The fire truck was rated as a masculine toy by a slightly higher percentage of boys than girls (63%, 55%, respectively).

In regard to age groups of children, the majority of three-year-olds (40%) felt that the fire truck was a neutral toy, whereas 30% categorized it as a feminine toy. The majority of four-year-olds (57%) categorized the fire truck masculine compared to 74% of the five-year-olds who categorized it as a masculine toy.

Gas Station

Both boys and girls felt that the gas station was a toy for boys (72%, 61%, respectively).

A great percentage of the three-year-old children (80%) classified the gas station as a masculine toy, whereas 70% of the four-year-olds and 59% of the five-year-olds classified the gas station as a masculine toy.

Train Set

The majority of boys (67%) agreed that the train set was a masculine toy. Likewise, the majority of girls (52%)

gave the train set a masculine rating. However, a considerable percentage of the girls (45%) classified the train set neutral.

A large percentage of three-year-old children (80%) chose a masculine rating for the train set. The majority of four-year-olds (62%) also rated this toy masculine. Slightly more than half (52%) of the five-year-olds rated the train set masculine; slightly less than half (48%) considered it a neutral toy.

In summary, regarding the children's ratings of the masculine toys by sex, the majority of both boys and girls rated each of the six masculine toys as masculine. However, the percentage of boys rating each toy masculine was higher than the girls. More girls than boys rated the masculine toys as feminine. The girls also rated more of the masculine toys as neutral. A higher percentage of both boys and girls rated the airplane masculine compared to their ratings of the other toys. The highest percentage of boys rated the fire truck as a feminine toy. The highest percentage of girls rated the cars as a feminine toy. A higher percentage of both boys and girls rated the train set neutral compared to their ratings of the other toys.

To summarize the children's ratings of the masculine toys by age, a higher percentage of the three-year-old children rated the airplane, gas station, and train set masculine than did the four-year-old or five-year-old

children. A higher percentage of four-year-old children rated the dump truck, cars, airplane, and gas station feminine than did the three-year-old or five-year-old children. A higher percentage of three-year-old children gave each of the masculine toys neutral ratings compared to the four-year-old and five-year-old children.

Feminine Toys. The following information about feminine toys as related to sex and age of children is found in Tables XX, XXI.

Purse

The purse was classified by the majority of boys (74%) as well as the majority of girls (84%) as a feminine toy.

The purse was classified as a feminine toy across all age levels of children. Sixty percent of the three-year-old children, 73% of the four-year-old children, and 93% of the five-year-old children felt that the purse was a toy for girls.

Doll House

The majority of boys (65%) and the majority of girls (74%) rated the doll house as a feminine toy.

Less than half (40%) of the three-year-old children considered the doll house a feminine toy, whereas 30% considered it to be a masculine toy, and 30% considered it to be a neutral toy. Sixty-eight percent of the four-year-old children, and 82% of the five-year-old children considered the doll house a toy for girls.

TABLE XX
MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS
OF FEMININE TOYS BY SEX

<u>TOY</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>SEX OF CHILD</u>	
		<u>MALE</u> (n=43)	<u>FEMALE</u> (n=31)
PURSE	Masculine	7.0%	3.2%
	Feminine	74.4	83.9
	Neutral	18.6	12.9
DOLL HOUSE	Masculine	11.6	3.2
	Feminine	65.1	74.2
	Neutral	23.3	22.6
CRADLE	Masculine	9.3	3.2
	Feminine	62.8	80.6
	Neutral	27.9	16.1
BABY DOLL	Masculine	4.7	3.2
	Feminine	74.4	58.1
	Neutral	20.9	38.7
TEA SET	Masculine	14.0	6.5
	Feminine	69.8	67.7
	Neutral	16.3	25.8
HIGH CHAIR	Masculine	18.6	19.4
	Feminine	53.5	58.1
	Neutral	27.9	22.6

TABLE XXI
MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS
OF FEMININE TOYS BY AGE

<u>TOY</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>AGE OF CHILD</u>		
		<u>3-yr.-olds</u> (n=10)	<u>4-yr.-olds</u> (n=37)	<u>5-yr.-olds</u> (n=27)
PURSE	Masculine	20.0%	5.4%	0%
	Feminine	60.0	73.0	92.6
	Neutral	20.0	21.6	7.4
DOLL HOUSE	Masculine	30.0	8.1	0
	Feminine	40.0	67.6	81.5
	Neutral	30.0	24.3	18.5
CRADLE	Masculine	30.0	5.4	0
	Feminine	60.0	73.0	70.4
	Neutral	10.0	21.6	29.6
BABY DOLL	Masculine	10.0	5.4	0
	Feminine	50.0	70.3	70.4
	Neutral	40.0	24.3	29.6
TEA SET	Masculine	30.0	13.5	0
	Feminine	50.0	70.3	74.1
	Neutral	20.0	16.2	25.9
HIGH CHAIR	Masculine	50.0	21.6	3.7
	Feminine	30.0	56.8	63.0
	Neutral	20.0	21.6	33.3

Cradle

Both boys and girls felt that the cradle was a feminine toy (63%, 81%, respectively).

Sixty percent of the three-year-old children sorted this toy as feminine, 73% of the four-year-old children sorted it as feminine, and 70% of the five-year-old children also sorted the cradle as feminine.

Baby Doll

The majority of boys (74%) and girls (58%) categorized the baby doll as a feminine toy.

Half of the three-year-old children (50%) considered the baby doll to be a toy for girls, whereas 40% considered it to be a neutral toy, and 10% considered it to be a masculine toy. Seventy percent of both four-year-old children and five-year-old children considered it to be a feminine toy.

Tea Set

A large percentage of both boys and girls rated the tea set as a feminine toy (70%, 68%, respectively).

All age levels of children rated the tea set as a feminine toy. Fifty percent of the three-year-old children rated it feminine, 30% rated it masculine, and the other 20% rated it as a neutral toy. The majority of four-year-old children (70%) agreed with a feminine rating, as did 74% of the five-year-old children.

High Chair

Slightly more than half of the boys (54%) sorted the high chair as a toy for girls, whereas 58% of the girls agreed with a feminine classification.

Half of the three-year-old children (50%) decided that the high chair was a toy for boys, 30% chose a feminine rating, and 20% chose a neutral rating. More than half of the four-year-old children (57%), and the five-year-old children (63%) gave the high chair a feminine rating.

In summary regarding the children's rating of the feminine toys by sex, the majority of both boys and girls rated each of the six feminine toys as feminine. With the exceptions of the baby doll and the tea set, a higher percentage of the girls rated each toy feminine than did the boys. More boys than girls rated the feminine toys as masculine. The toy that received the highest percentage of feminine ratings by both boys and girls was the purse. The toy that received the highest percentage of masculine ratings by both boys and girls was the high chair. The toys that were given the highest neutral rating by the boys were the cradle and high chair. The girls gave the highest neutral rating to the baby doll.

To summarize the children's ratings of the feminine toys by age, a higher percentage of five-year-old children compared to three- and four-year-old children, rated the purse, doll house, baby doll, tea set, and high chair

feminine. More three-year-old children gave masculine ratings to all of the feminine toys than did four-year-old and five-year-old children. A higher percentage of five-year-old children compared to three- and four-year-old children, rated the cradle, baby doll, tea set, and high chair neutral.

Masculine, Feminine, and Neutral Ratings of Toys by Teachers, Parents, and Children

The following information pertains to teachers', parents' and children's ratings of the masculine and feminine toys that were selected by the teachers. The six feminine toys will be considered first, followed by the six masculine toys.

Feminine Toys. Information about ratings of feminine toys by teachers, parents, and children is found in Table XXII.

Purse

The majority of the teachers, parents, and children (62%, 86%, 78%, respectively) rated the purse as a feminine toy.

Doll House

The majority of the teachers (55%) rated the doll house as a neutral toy, while the majority of parents (80%) rated the doll house as a feminine toy. Sixty-nine percent of the

TABLE XXII
MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS
OF FEMININE TOYS BY TEACHER, PARENT, AND CHILD

<u>TOY</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>TEACHER</u> (n=58)	<u>PARENT</u> (n=78)	<u>CHILD</u> (n=74)
PURSES	Masculine	0%	0%	5.4%
	Feminine	62.1	85.9	78.4
	Neutral	37.9	14.1	16.2
DOLL HOUSE	Masculine	0	0	8.1
	Feminine	44.8	79.5	68.9
	Neutral	55.2	20.5	23.0
CRADLE	Masculine	0	0	6.8
	Feminine	41.4	76.9	70.3
	Neutral	58.6	23.1	23.0
BABY DOLL	Masculine	0	0	4.1
	Feminine	41.4	73.1	67.6
	Neutral	58.6	26.9	28.4
TEA SET	Masculine	0	1.3	10.8
	Feminine	39.7	67.9	68.9
	Neutral	60.3	30.8	20.3
HIGH CHAIR	Masculine	0	0	18.9
	Feminine	32.8	47.4	55.4
	Neutral	67.2	52.6	25.7

children agreed with the parents' rating of the doll house as a toy for girls.

Cradle

The cradle was rated neutral by more than half of the teachers (59%), and rated feminine by more than half of the parents (77%). The majority of the children (70%) agreed with the parents' rating of the cradle as a feminine toy.

Baby Doll

The majority of parents (73%) and children (68%) felt that the baby doll was a toy for girls, whereas the majority of the teachers (59%) rated it as a neutral toy.

Tea Set

The tea set was rated by 60% of the teachers as a toy for either boys or girls; 68% of the parents and 69% of the children felt that it was a feminine toy.

High Chair

The majority of teachers and parents rated the high chair as a neutral toy (67%, 53%, respectively), whereas the majority of children (55%) rated it as a feminine toy.

In summary regarding ratings of feminine toys by teachers, parents, and children, the majority of the teachers rated five out of six feminine toys as neutral. This compares to the majority of the parents rating five out of six of the feminine toys as feminine. The majority of the children rated all of the six feminine toys as feminine. With the exception of one toy, the teachers and parents

agreed that none of the feminine toys were masculine, compared to a small percentage of children who categorized each feminine toy as masculine. A higher percentage of teachers, parents, and children rated the purse as feminine compared to the other toys. A higher percentage of teachers and parents rated the high chair neutral, compared to a higher percentage of children rating the baby doll neutral. Masculine Toys. The following information about ratings of masculine toys by teachers, parents, and children is found in Table XXIII.

Dump Truck

Half of the teachers (50%) rated the dump truck as a masculine toy, while the other 50% of the teachers rated it as a neutral toy. The parents (73%), and children (64%) agreed on a masculine rating for the dump truck.

Cars

A majority of the teachers (52%) classified the cars as a neutral toy. A majority of the parents (58%) classified the cars as a masculine toy. A majority of the children (68%) also classified the cars as a masculine toy.

Airplane

The teachers and parents agreed on a neutral rating for the airplane (62%, 54%, respectively), while 80% of the children felt that the airplane was a toy for boys.

TABLE XXIII
MASCULINE, FEMININE, AND NEUTRAL RATINGS
OF MASCULINE TOYS BY TEACHER, PARENT, AND CHILD

<u>TOY</u>	<u>RATING</u>	<u>TEACHER</u> (n=58)	<u>PARENT</u> (n=78)	<u>CHILD</u> (n=74)
DUMP TRUCK	Masculine	50.0%	73.1%	63.5%
	Feminine	0	0	4.1
	Neutral	50.0	26.9	32.4
CARS	Masculine	48.3	57.7	67.6
	Feminine	0	0	9.5
	Neutral	51.7	42.3	23.0
AIRPLANE	Masculine	37.9	46.2	79.7
	Feminine	0	0	2.7
	Neutral	62.1	53.8	17.6
FIRE TRUCK	Masculine	37.9	64.1	59.5
	Feminine	0	0	8.1
	Neutral	62.1	35.9	32.4
GAS STATION	Masculine	34.5	56.4	67.6
	Feminine	0	0	8.1
	Neutral	65.5	43.6	24.3
TRAIN SET	Masculine	32.8	59.0	60.8
	Feminine	0	0	4.1
	Neutral	67.2	41.0	35.1

Fire Truck

Sixty-two percent of the teachers rated the fire truck as a toy for either boys or girls. The parents (64%) and children (60%) agreed on a masculine rating for the fire truck.

Gas Station

The gas station was categorized as a neutral toy by 66% of the teachers. The majority of children (68%) categorized the gas station as a masculine toy.

Train Set

The majority of teachers (67%) chose a neutral rating for the train set, whereas the majority of both parents and children (59%, 61%, respectively) chose a masculine rating for the train set.

In summary regarding ratings of masculine toys by teachers, parents, and children, the majority of the teachers rated five out of the six masculine toy as neutral. This compares to the majority of the parents rating five out of six of the masculine toys as masculine. The majority of the children rated all six of the masculine toys as masculine. The parents and teachers rated none of the masculine toys as feminine compared to a small percentage of children who categorized each masculine toy as feminine. A higher percentage of teachers and parents rated the dump truck masculine, compared to the highest percentage of children rating the airplane masculine. A higher percentage

of teachers and children agreed on a neutral rating for the train set, whereas the highest percentage of parents rated the airplane as neutral.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The intent of this study was to investigate how children, parents, and teachers classified toys according to gender categories.

The results of the study indicated that children today behave in a very stereotypic way when it comes to gender classification of toys. The conclusions are consistent with what is known from previous research in this area, that is, that children classify toys according to what they consider appropriate for their own sex role and inhibit choices associated with the opposite sex role (Mischel, 1966).

Children's Toy Classifications

In this study, children's toy classifications were investigated as they were affected by two variables: age of child and sex of child. The results revealed a statistically significant relationship between age of child and how the toys were sorted into gender categories. All of the feminine toys were sorted as feminine by a much greater percentage of the five-year-old children than three-year-old children. More three-year-old children gave masculine ratings to all of the feminine toys than did four-year-old and five-year-old children.

In regards to sex of child as related to classification of toys, both boys and girls were strongly stereotypic in

their ratings of the toys. Each of the masculine toys was rated as masculine by a majority of the boys. Each of the feminine toys was rated as feminine by a majority of the boys. More boys than girls rated the feminine toys as masculine. Likewise, the majority of the girls rated each of the masculine toys as masculine and each of the feminine toys as feminine. With the exception of two toys out of the total of twelve toys, the masculine toys were rated as feminine by a greater percentage of girls than boys. With the exception of four toys, a higher percentage of girls than boys classified toys as neutral. This indicates that evidence gathered from this study is inconclusive as to which gender is more stereotypic in gender related toy classifications.

Evidence about the reasons why children classified the toys as they did is inconclusive because there is no way of knowing children's reasons for their classifications of the toys. Determining factors may have included the age of the child, how much a child identified with the toy photograph, how familiar that toy was to the child, and how much the toy appealed to the child.

Because the sorting baskets and toy photographs used in this study were presented to all children in the same order, it is impossible to rule out order effects on the data. Therefore, it is recommended that some caution be used in

drawing conclusions about the children's toy classifications.

Data from this study indicated that the majority of parents and a high percentage of teachers, rated the toys according to gender stereotypic classifications of masculinity and femininity. Thus the conclusion may be drawn that there is the possibility that sexist influences on children's toy choices may be coming from both the home and school environments.

Parents' Toy Classifications

According to the data from this research, five of the six masculine toys were rated as masculine by a majority of the parents. Likewise, five of the six feminine toys were rated as feminine by a majority of the parents. Higher percentages of parents rated the feminine toys feminine than rated the masculine toys masculine, indicating that the parents felt more strongly about the feminine classification of girls' toys. A higher percentage of the parents rated the masculine toys as neutral than rated the feminine toys as neutral. This indicates that parents felt that the masculine toys in the study were more acceptable as toys for either boys or girls than were the feminine toys.

Even though some investigators suggest that sex-typed differences in the home environment (household tasks) may be diminishing as the result of increasing numbers of women in the work force (Hoffman, 1977), this study indicates that

sex differences as related to children's toy choices still appear to reflect traditional sex role expectations by parents.

The population of parents who were surveyed in this study were parents connected with a Head Start preschool program. This circumstance should be noted as a possible limitation on results, as past research reports that low income, less educated parents are more likely to be traditional in their beliefs about sex-typed play (Brooke-Gunn, 1986).

Teachers' Toy Classifications

Previous studies have investigated how teachers influence the toy choices and play styles of young children (Oettingen, 1985). The present study reveals that although the teachers do not appear to be as sex-typed in their toy classifications as parents seem to be, it is possible that they are influencing young children's play in the school environment. There was a substantial percentage of teachers who rated toys according to gender stereotypic classifications. For example, 50% of the teachers rated the dump truck masculine. Forty-eight percent of the teachers rated the cars masculine. Similarly with the feminine toys, 45% of the teachers rated the doll house feminine; 41% of the teachers rated the cradle and baby doll feminine. The implication of this finding is that some teachers are likely

to be emphasizing sex differences among children in their classrooms.

Further Study

The children and parents involved in this study came from a low socioeconomic background. Future studies should involve larger samples to include children and parents from middle and upper class backgrounds.

A larger sample of children including toddlers and primary-aged children would offer more diversity and extended knowledge in this area.

As societal role expectations of men and women are changing, more studies are needed that measure sex differences among children from homes in which both parents work outside the home compared to homes in which one parent of a two-parent household work outside the home. Studies about sex differences among children from families of single mothers and studies that show children's attitudes toward sex differences when the father is the primary care giver might prove interesting.

Another possible research focus is the influence of peer pressure on children's toy choices.

Future studies about teachers' and parents' gender typed classifications of toys should include more male teachers and more male parents. Differences between male and female teachers' and parents' ratings could then be examined.

Further research investigating the relationship between sex typing in play and the development of specific social and cognitive skills should be considered. The relationship between sex-typed play expectations and children's self concept should also be examined.

This study has established that parents and teachers are possible influencing agents of sex-typed play styles of young children. Future studies should concentrate on other possible factors of influence such as the influence of mass media (television) in promoting sex stereotyping.

Psychologists maintain that young children have three sources of reality, that is, three sources from which to learn about the real world--what they learn at home, what they learn at school, and what they learn on television (Signorelli, 1991). The toy commercials and children's programs on television often perpetuate traditional, stereotypical sex roles which tend to socialize children in this direction.

A review of related research provided a mass of literature written on the subject of sex differences as related to children's play choices. However, the bulk of this research was done in the 1970-1980 time period. Many interesting and informative studies were done which should be replicated to provide current information about this topic.

Recommendations

Because the data of this study clearly revealed that many teachers are stereotyped in their toy classifications, a recommendation should be made to college educators in the area of Early Childhood Education to make a conscious effort to include in their curriculum subject matter which deals with sex stereotyping and the negative impact it has on young children's development. In terms of social development as well as future achievement for children, teachers must take responsibility for removing stereotypical beliefs and attitudes about sex roles in the school environment.

Pressure on children to conform to rigid sex-typed behaviors can have a long lasting effect on children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. It appears that although national attention has been given to promote sex equity in society for adults, our young children are still being influenced by sexist attitudes relating to toy choices. Recommendations include restructuring early play experiences of young children with an earnest and purposeful attack on all societal influences on sex-typing. Influences which emphasize sex stereotyped differences in children's play may cripple both boys and girls in terms of future achievement.

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APPENDIX A

PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM TOYS SORTING ACTIVITY - TEACHERS

74

Below you will find a list of preschool classroom toys. Please classify each into the area of gender identity that you feel is appropriate.

Masculine--a toy mainly for boys
Feminine--a toy mainly for girls
Neutral--a toy for both boys and girls

Please circle your responses. Be sure to classify every item on each of the three pages.

Example:

<i>TOY</i>	<i>strictly masculine</i>	<i>somewhat masculine</i>	<i>neutral</i>	<i>somewhat feminine</i>	<i>strictly feminine</i>
AIRPLANE	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
ABACUS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BABY DOLL	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BALLS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BARN AND FARM ANIMALS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BEADS FOR STRINGING	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BLOCKS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BOARD GAMES	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BOOKS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BROOM	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
CAMERA	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
CARS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
CASH REGISTER	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
COOKING SET (DISHES, UTENSILS)	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine

CRADLE	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
CRAYONS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
DINOSAURS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
DOLL HOUSE	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
DUMP TRUCK	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
DRESS UP CLOTHING (FIRE FIGHTER)	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
FIRE TRUCK	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
GAS STATION	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
GROCERIES- PLAY FOOD	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
HIGH CHAIR	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
LACING/ SEWING CARDS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
LEGOS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
MAGNETS- MAGNETIC BOARD	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
MR. POTATO HEAD	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
MRS. POTATO HEAD	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
MY BUDDY DOLL	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
DRESS UP CLOTHING (NURSE)	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
PAINTS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
PEG BOARDS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
PLAY-DOH	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
PLAY HOUSE	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine

PURSES	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
PUZZLES	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
RHYTHM INSTRUMENTS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
SHOPPING CART	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
STUFFED ANIMALS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
TEA SET	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
TELEPHONE	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
TOOL SET	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
TRAIN SET	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
VACUUM CLEANER	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
WAGON	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
WHEELBARROW	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
WORK BENCH	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
ZOO ANIMALS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine

For data analysis purposes, please provide the following information

Your age _____ sex ____M ____F
 Do you have children? ____No ____Yes (____boys ____girls)
 What are their ages? _____
 What grade level do you teach presently? _____
 What other grade levels have you taught? _____
 How many years of teaching experience do you have? _____
 Do you have an endorsement in Early Childhood Education? _____

Thank you very much for your assistance in this project

APPENDIX B

PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM TOYS

SORTING ACTIVITY - PARENTS

78

Below you will find a list of preschool classroom toys. Please classify each into the area of gender identity that you feel is appropriate.

Masculine--a toy mainly for boys
Feminine--a toy mainly for girls
Neutral--a toy for both boys and girls

Please circle your responses. Be sure to classify every item on each of the three pages.

Example:

TOY	<i>strictly masculine</i>	<i>somewhat masculine</i>	<i>neutral</i>	<i>somewhat feminine</i>	<i>strictly feminine</i>
AIRPLANE	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
ABACUS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BABY DOLL	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BALLS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BARN AND FARM ANIMALS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BEADS FOR STRINGING	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BLOCKS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BOARD GAMES	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BOOKS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
BROOM	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
CAMERA	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
CARS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
CASH REGISTER	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
COOKING SET (DISHES, UTENSILS)	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine

CRADLE	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
CRAYONS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
DINOSAURS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
DOLL HOUSE	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
DUMP TRUCK	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
DRESS UP CLOTHING (FIRE FIGHTER)	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
FIRE TRUCK	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
GAS STATION	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
GROCERIES- PLAY FOOD	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
HIGH CHAIR	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
LACING/ SEWING CARDS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
LEGOS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
MAGNETS- MAGNETIC BOARD	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
MR. POTATO HEAD	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
MRS. POTATO HEAD	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
MY BUDDY DOLL	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
DRESS UP CLOTHING (NURSE)	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
PAINTS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
PEG BOARDS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
PLAY-DOH	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
PLAY HOUSE	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine
PURSES	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine

PUZZLES	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	80
RHYTHM INSTRUMENTS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
SHOPPING CART	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
STUFFED ANIMALS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
TEA SET	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
TELEPHONE	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
TOOL SET	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
TRAIN SET	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
VACUUM CLEANER	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
WAGON	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
WHEELBARROW	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
WORK BENCH	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	
ZOO ANIMALS	strictly masculine	somewhat masculine	neutral	somewhat feminine	strictly feminine	

For data analysis purposes, please provide the following information

Your age _____ sex ____ M ____ F

How many children do you have? _____ Boys _____ Girls

What are their ages? _____

Thank you very much for your assistance in this project