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INFLUENCE OF A MALE OR FEMALE TEACHER ON SEX-ROLE

PREFERENCES OF THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

by

Mary Jane Mecham

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Child Development

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful appreciation is expressed to Dr. Don C. Carter, my major professor, for many unselfish hours of guidance, support, and encouragement throughout my graduate program; and to Carroll Lambert, with whom I have worked as a graduate assistant, for her friendship, counsel, and encouragement; to my graduate committee members, Dr. Don C. Carter, Dr. E. Malcolm Allred, Carroll Lambert, and Dorothy Lewis for their help and suggestions; to Owen Cahoon and Valera Holman for their cooperation as head teachers, to the children in the study; and to my family and friends, for their many hours of patient understanding.

Special appreciation is expressed to my three lovely children, Steven, Patricia Ann, and Neil for their patience and devotion to me while I have been working on this study.

Jane Mecham

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INTRODUCTION

The primary function of a nursery school is to educate children, or to provide opportunities for them to learn about their environment, their relationships, and their own selves. The most crucial part of the learning situation in the nursery school is the teacher, whose task it is to promote learning through provision of a variety of experiences by means of which children can discover themselves and begin to relate to the world and to other people.

The importance of having understanding and capable teachers in the classroom has been recognized for many years. The teacher of young children helps to establish not only the social and emotional foundation, but also the cognitive foundation for continued growth. The teacher is very often a person with whom the child is identified and, in this way, makes an important contribution to the child's developing sense of self.

One aspect of the child's development as a person, on which the teacher may have an influence, is to be found in the area of sex-role identification. Every child is born male or female, and must learn to be masculine or feminine, in ways approved by his society. This process begins very early, and is learned from parents, siblings, peers, teachers, and others with whom the child comes in contact in his early years.

The pre-school years are years of encountering new experiences, new concepts, and ideas. A child's concepts are built by a process of seeing relationships, categorizing, discriminating, and generalizing about those things which he sees, hears, and feels in his environment. There is widespread recognition that by the age of three or four children have acquired hundreds of concepts. From infancy, children have been attempting to attach meanings to their experiences with their environment. The very young child, therefore, must struggle to handle his increasing awareness of concepts and their complexities. The creative use of play is one of the mechanisms he uses to make his new experiences and his new understanding a part of himself. Children's play is an important media for learning and expression. It is in play that he acts out the ideas he has acquired through his experiences. It is through play that he is able to make his understanding of new concepts and processes a part of himself, (Wann, 1963).

This process applies to the child's acquisition of knowledge about sex-typed activities. As part of his learning about himself as a masculine or feminine person, the child acts out, through play, his conceptions of what it means to be a male or female; masculine or feminine. He will act out not only the sex-appropriate behavior which is characteristic of his own sex, but also some sex-inappropriate behavior, if it is true that play serves as a means of discovery. For example, a boy may find increased understanding of what it means to be a girl,

through participation in feminine-approved play behavior. Thus, a boy may engage in "playing house" in the role of the father, brother, or grandfather as a means of finding himself as a male person, or he may act out the role of a mother, sister, or grandmother as a means of finding, through his play, something more of what it means to be a feminine person.

This process of sex typing refers to the adoption of beliefs, attitudes, and activities which the culture defines as appropriate for one's sex. It must be recognized that most members of our Western civilization share a common conviction that boys should be boys and girls should be girls.

While boys are discouraged from participating in girl's play, girls are seldom discouraged from participating in boy's play. In the Child Development Laboratory, this is manifest by boys avoidance of the doll house area as they grow older. This, however, is not accompanied by any comparable decrease in such activities as use of the work-bench by the girls.

Through observing young children in neighborhoods, homes, and in the Child Development Laboratory one readily becomes aware of the differences in the children's acquisition of accepted sex-role behaviors.

One day a little four year old boy, playing dolls with his older sister, was having a good time and seemed to be completely comfortable in the situation until an older boy came along jeering at them saying,

"Boys can't play with dolls, that's sissy stuff!"

On another occasion two little girls playing in the neighborhood were swinging from the limb of a tree and having a wonderful time, until two boys came along singing, "You're a tomboy, you're a tomboy; you play in trees." Where ever children are, you will find them assuming some sort of sex-typed behavior.

The children in the Child Development Laboratory are encouraged to be themselves, to play what they wish, to discover and explore, to learn who they really are. However, even here, where boys and girls play and associate together, there is a sense of what is appropriate sex role behavior. When do children begin to realize and accept appropriate sex-role patterns? How early is this imposed on them at school, by parents, by peers? Or do they, as they grow, develop a sense of their own about sex identification and preferences?

Relatively little is known about sex-role behavior in the process of internalizing social roles. There have been studies on young children regarding development of their sex-role preferences, sex adoption, and identification but relatively little is known about the influence of male or female teachers on the determination of these preferences in pre-school children.

Because the pre-school child is at an age when he is beginning to make the break from the influence of the mother and the dependence of the home, it may be the best time for him to benefit from benign male

influence, or it may be equally important for him to be with a female teacher, outside of the home. In any event, his teacher is important because it is at this age that he is forming his basic attitudes toward the world and the people in it. He needs to learn that social roles are developed through the influence of both males and females.

There is some evidence which indicates that the interests of children in the fourth grade are primarily determined by their sex-appropriateness, or by their fitting into stereotypes of appropriate sex-role activities and behavior (Tyler, 1955). It is recognized that the pre-school child probably has not found himself under pressure to conform to sex-role stereotypes in a manner comparable to the 10 year old child in the fourth grade. Nevertheless, observation of children in the Child Development Laboratory indicates that they are aware of masculine and feminine role-expectations. One little boy consistently played house but he was always the father, brother, or grandfather. He wanted to be a part of this feminine activity. However, he always wanted to play the masculine role. When confronted with "being a sissy" because he liked to play house, he would reply, "There has to be a daddy." Observation of another three year old boy showed him constantly cooking breakfast in the doll house area. He was playing a sex-inappropriate role. However, he was learning what it was like to take part in a feminine activity. On one occasion the children were playing hospital, one of the little girls wanted to be the doctor but the boys quickly

replied, "Girls can not be doctors, they can only be nurses." Such examples indicate that the concept of appropriate sex-role behavior is learned relatively early in a child's life.

It is the purpose of this study to investigate the influence of male or female teachers on the selection of sex-typed behavior by three and four year old children in the Child Development Laboratory, to determine the degree of awareness of sex-appropriateness, as well as the influence of age and sex upon the child's awareness.

Statement of the Problem

The very young child is unaware of sex roles or of appropriate behaviors for each sex. However, by the time the child enters nursery school he is becoming increasingly aware of masculine and feminine roles. He is beginning to see some activities as being appropriately masculine or feminine, and preferences are beginning to become evident.

The problem to be investigated in this study is the influence that a male or female teacher may have on the sex-role activity preferences that pre-school children make.

Varied procedures have been used to study the problem of sex preferences and identifications of young children, a few of which include: sex preference scales, doll play procedures, personality inventories, toy preference tests, human figure drawings and children's game choices.

The present study approached the problem through natural laboratory

experiences with the children, using one group of children under the direction of a female teacher with a similar group directed by a male.

Objectives of the Study

The study was concerned with the following objectives:

1. To obtain information about the sex-role preferences and identifications of young children.
2. To obtain information concerning the influence that a male or female teacher may have on the sex-role preferences of pre-school children.

The objectives of the study were defined in the form of the following hypotheses:

1. Each child will select those activities traditionally defined as most appropriate for his sex.
2. Both boys and girls will choose more masculine activities when invited by a male teacher than when invited by a female teacher.
3. Only girls will choose more feminine activities when invited by a female teacher than by a male.
4. The girls in the study will choose more masculine activities than the boys will choose feminine; boys will show a greater preference for the masculine role than the girls will for the feminine role.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sex-role Preference and Identification

There have been several studies of young children regarding the development of their sex-role preferences and identifications. However, very few studies have been made regarding the influence of a male or female teacher on the sex-role preferences of pre-school children.

Brown (1957), Brown (1959), and Hartley (1960) refer to the need of further studies concerning sex-role behavior. The importance of sex-role adjustment is commonly recognized.

Personal normality presupposes that an individual has assimilated not only those values and ideals which are regarded as necessary and proper for all persons, but also those values and ideals which are uniquely appropriate to one's sex-role, as a man or as a woman. (Mowrer, 1950, p. 615)

There is need for a better understanding of the process by which a little boy adopts the masculine role and learns how to be a "man" and a little girl adopts the feminine role and learns how to be a "woman."

Even though the number of related studies are few, the results of what studies have been done show the influence of many factors in the psycho-sexual development of children.

Whether a person is male or female biologically is dependent upon genetic and biological processes, but whether that person is male or female socially and psychologically (i.e., in terms of sex-role behavior) is in large measure dependent

upon learning, environmental factors and experiential development. (Brown, 1956, p. 14)

Basically, Johnson (1963) suggests that it is identification with the father, in the sense of internalizing a reciprocal role relationship with the father, which is crucial for producing appropriate sex-role orientations in both males and females. In order to see how girls might learn their sex-role by identifying with the cross-sex parent it is necessary to define identification.

Parsons (1958) suggests that even though the child is first influenced by the mother, he does not necessarily learn to be like her.

Only in a very qualified sense can one say that an infant learns to be like his mother. Rather, he learns to play a social role in interaction with her; his behavior--hence his motivation, is organized according to a generalized pattern of norms which define shared and internalized meanings of the acts occurring in both sides. (Parsons, 1958, p. 328)

Sex-role preference defined by Brown (1957), Lynn (1959), Kagan (1964), and Rabban (1950) refers to the desire or tendency to adopt the sex-role behavior of one sex in contrast to the other sex, or the perception that such behavior is more preferable or desirable.

Brown (1956), Brown (1958), and Lynn (1959) define sex-role identification as the basic process in which a child involuntarily, and later consciously, incorporates the thinking, feeling, and acting of a given sex into his own behavior.

Lynn (1959) further suggests that sex-role identification, being

a more deeply rooted process than either sex-role preference or sex-role adoption, is consequently more slowly changed. However, through the reinforcement of the culture's highly developed system of reward and punishment, the boy's early learned identification with his mother eventually weakens and becomes more or less replaced by the learned identification with a culturally defined, somewhat stereotyped masculine role.

Unlike the situation for the boy whose sex-role is well spelled out for him, the girls do not receive adequate reinforcement through distinct rewards for adopting the feminine role and definite punishment for adopting the masculine. On the contrary she is in a sense, punished simply for being born female, whereas the boy is rewarded simply for being born male. (Lynn, 1959, p. 128)

In American and European culture, both boys and girls form their first identification with a female. Sears, Maccoby, and Levin (1957); Fauls and Smith (1956); Parsons (1958); Mussen and Sistler (1959); and Sears (1953) support this by saying that for both male and female infants, learning to identify with the mother is among the earliest learning processes, but this identification is not sex-typed. It is the next identification with the father, coming after the state of infantile dependency on the mother, which is crucial for appropriate sex-role learning. Early identifying with the mother for the girl is acceptable for she will retain this identification throughout her life. However, the boy must shift from his initial identification with the mother to identification with the masculine role early in his life.

Mussen and Distler (1959) suggest that for boys, sex-typing is more directly related to their perceptions of their fathers than to perceptions of their mothers. "The acquisitions of masculine interests, attitudes, and patterns of behavior is primarily determined by the boy's interactions with his father," (Mussen and Distler, 1959, p. 354).

Pre-school children are aware that the world is divided into two groups of people and that different behavior patterns are expected of these two groups. Brown (1958) explains that a child may identify with and prefer the sex-role appropriate to his own sex; or he may identify with one sex-role and prefer the other; or he may identify with and prefer the sex-role of the opposite sex. However, early in the child's life, probably the third year, preference for one sex-role or the other begins to emerge. Rabban (1950) offers further evidence of this in his findings which indicate that the three year old child does not have a clear conception of himself as a boy or as a girl and he does not make sex appropriate choices. However, from the age of three upward, this awareness of sex-typed behavior develops.

Rabban (1950) developed a technique which consisted of asking children to state their preferences from a group of 16 toys--eight of which were boys and eight of which were girls. The administration of this test showed that boys possess clear-cut preference patterns earlier than girls and strong appropriate preference patterns appear earlier among lower class than middle class children. Lower class mothers

encourage sex-typing more consistently than do mothers of the middle class. Rabban says that lower class boys reach a stable high level of sex identification by the time they reach five, while in the middle class boys do not reach this level until they are six. Middle class girls do not reach this level until almost eight years of age.

Brown (1956) measured children's sex-role preferences by means of a projective test called the "It Scale For Children." This test is probably the most common method employed in studies of children's sex-role preferences. The test consists of 36 picture cards depicting various objects, figures, and activities commonly associated with either masculine or feminine roles. The child chooses from alternatives which are presented to him. The "It" figure focuses the testing situation on "It" rather than on the child directly. In this way the child projects his sex-role preference to "It." Brown's findings indicate that sex-role patterns exist in young children, that young boys as a group identify with models, activities, and goals that are socially defined as masculine while young girls as a group identify with those that are socially defined as feminine. Children show considerable variability in their preferences with a tendency for the girls to be about twice as frequent as the boys to prefer a combination of masculine and feminine roles.

Brown (1957) gave the "It" test to 310 girls, and 303 boys ranging in age from $5\frac{1}{2}$ to $11\frac{1}{2}$ years of age. He found, in sharp contrast to the

strong masculine role preference of boys, girls as a group do not show nearly the same degree of feminine role preference. At the kindergarten level girls show what may be described as a "mixed role" pattern. At the first grade level, and extending through the fourth grade, a much stronger preference is expressed for aspects of the masculine role than for the feminine role. When girls of all ages, in all of the grades tested, were combined, 40 percent scored at or near an exclusively masculine score and about 17 percent scored at or near an exclusively feminine score. Boys showed predominantly masculine role preference at the kindergarten and first grade level and even a stronger masculine preference at the second through the fifth grade. With the boys, when all grades were combined, about 63 percent responded with exclusively or nearly exclusive masculine preference; however, about four percent were exclusively feminine. These findings show that girls as a group do not show nearly the same degree of preference for their feminine role that boys show for their masculine role. These findings are also supported by Lynn (1959), Fauls and Smith (1956), and Brown (1956). Even though girls choose more feminine activities than boys, boys show a comparatively greater preference for the masculine role than the girls show for the feminine role. However, Lynn (1959) and Brown (1956) support the suggestions that the early closeness of the girl to the mother or female model naturally gives her an initial advantage in developing proper sexual identification.

The preference for sex-typed activities increases during the pre-school years. Hartup and Zook (1960) and Mussen, Conger, and Kagan (1965) support this in their findings that four year old children, for example, show a much greater preference for objects and activities appropriate to their sex than do three year olds. Four year old boys are more masculine than three year old boys, and four year old girls are more feminine than three year old girls. During the fourth and fifth years, clarification of sex-role development grows rapidly. Sears, Maccoby, and Levin (1957) suggest that by kindergarten age boys are male and girls are female, and they both know how to act accordingly.

During the rapid clarification of sex-role development, Brown (1957) shows that girls, by the time they reach the fifth grade, show much less preference for masculine role preferences and express, instead, a stronger and increased preference for the female role. However, even at this level a larger percentage of girls, compared to boys, express a preference for the role of the opposite sex.

Children's Concepts of Male and Female Roles--

Why Masculine Preferences?

The concept of sex-role refers to those psychological characteristics and behavioral patterns that are typical of one sex in contrast to the other sex. The sex role of a person consists of the behavior that is socially defined and expected of that person because of his or her status as a male or female. (Brown, 1958, p. 232)

Children are introduced into expected sex-role behavior very early in life. Hartley (1959) observes that the individual is trained to his sex-role from the moment of birth when girls are placed in pink bassinets and boys are placed in blue. Infant girls are dressed in pink and infant boys are dressed in blue. Toys for appropriate sexes are given to very young children by parents in hopes that this will stimulate appropriate sex-role preference.

Brown (1958) suggests that masculine and feminine roles, by definition, are changing. More women are holding jobs outside the home, husbands are sharing more of the domestic tasks.

In recent years, according to Hartley (1960), a wide variety of experts suggest that the current changes in sex-role mores are confusing the children and that this confusion is interfering with their own sex identification. However, Vener and Weese (1965) suggest that male and female definitions may not be undergoing as radical a transformation as has been generally anticipated. This is supported by Hartley (1960) in her study to find out just how the masculine and feminine roles actually do appear to the children in today's world. The results of her study suggest that the traditional picture of women's roles have not seemed to change much, if at all, and there seems to be no confusion among the children as to their concept of male and female roles.

In response to those who are overly concerned about the effect of apparent recent sex-role changes, I would like

to point out that from the child's point of view, there are no "changes." He sees only the picture as it appears in his time, and this picture, shows remarkable little change from traditional values. If the forms of sex-role activities have changed somewhat, from the child's point of view their functions have not. (Hartley, 1960, p. 91)

Mussen and Distler (1960) in a study of five year old boys found that most children are aware of many sex appropriate behaviors. If presented with a series of pictures illustrating objects and activities congruent with the sex-typed play of boys and girls (i.e., guns, trucks, cowboys, dolls, kitchen utensils, and etc.) the vast majority of three, four, and five year olds will prefer the activities and objects thought appropriate for their age and sex.

Demands that boys conform to social notions of what is manly come much earlier, and are enforced with much more vigor than similar attitudes with respect to girls. Hartley (1959) suggests this after using pre-school children in several research studies, the findings of which indicate that boys are aware of what is expected of them because they are boys, and thus restrict their interests and activities to what is suitably "masculine." The desired behavior of boys is rarely defined positively as something the child should do, but rather the desirable behavior is indicated negatively as something he should not do or be. "Boys are not allowed to do the kind of things that girls usually do, but girls may do the kind of things that boys do." (Hartley, 1959, p. 461)

According to Kagan (1964) and Tyler (1955), the games, toys, and fantasy heroes chosen by young children corroborate the behavioral standards set by the culture in which they live. Research on children's games and toy preferences indicates that boys chose objects related to sports, machines, aggression, speed, and power roles; whereas girls select games and objects associated with the kitchen, home, babies, personal attractiveness, gardening, music, and art. Thus knives, boats, planes, trucks, and cement mixers are regarded by school children as masculine; dolls, cribs, dishes, and nurses equipment are regarded as being feminine.

Tyler (1955) suggests, on the basis of a study of 200 fourth graders that most of the average child's interests are determined by their sex appropriateness, that is to say whether or not the interest fits the cultural stereotype of a male or female activity.

Brown (1958) and Lynn (1959) suggest that the superior position and privileged status of the male permeates nearly every aspect, minor and major of our social life. The gadgets and prizes in boxes of breakfast cereal for example, commonly have a strong masculine rather than feminine appeal.

Lynn (1959), Mussen and Rutherford (1963), Mussen, Conger, Kagan (1965), and Rabban (1950) agree that even in our own country, where boys and girls are allowed to go to the same school, there exists a common conviction that boys and girls should behave differently. The

difference in physical training is very evident. Boys are encouraged in all forms of exercise and in outdoor life, while girls are restricted in physical exercise at a very early age. Thus parents are likely to encourage a boy to fight back if a peer attacks him, but they are likely to punish similar aggressive behavior in a girl. The physically well-coordinated boy is a hero in a neighborhood, while the overly athletic girl is labeled a tomboy. Only a few forms of exercise are considered "lady-like." Girls are aware of the proper behavior for them and realize they do not have the prestige that boys are granted. "Even young children are aware that the American culture ascribes greater prestige to the male role," (Rabban, 1950, p. 92).

Brown (1958) and Lynn (1959) suggest that even though girls are restricted in more activities than boys, they are allowed more freedom in opposite sex-role adoption. "In our culture, girls are allowed and often encouraged to participate in tasks and activities that are typical of boys," (Brown, 1957, p. 201).

Fauls and Smith (1956) suggest that parents contribute in a major fashion to the ease and accuracy with which the child learns the proper societal roles. In interviewing both boys and girls ages 4 to 9 and 5 to 9 he reports that children feel their parents prefer them to adopt sex-typed behavior and feel somewhat disappointed if they do not.

Mussen and Rutherford (1963), and Kagan (1964) suggest that the girl receives less support and assistance from the general social

environment in establishing appropriate sex-role behavior than does the boy. Hartley, Hardesty, and Gorfein (1962) support this by adding that cultural values in western society are male-oriented and the activities culturally assigned to males have greater prestige than the activities of females.

The Classical Freudian position stated by Lynn (1959) and Brown (1958) postulates that girls experience greater difficulty than boys in developing appropriate sexual identification because of their envy of the genital organ possessed by little boys. Whether it is because the male has something biological that the girl lacks or because the male has greater cultural privileges not granted to the girl, or because of both of these advantages, an investigation of sex-role preferences in children shows that girls tend to prefer the masculine role over the feminine role, or at least will show a significantly greater trend toward masculinity than boys show toward femininity.

Preference For Male or Female--Mother or Father

Nimkoff (1942) suggests that in the well-known Oedipus Theory, there is an inherent inclination toward innate unconscious sexual desire among sons for their mothers, among daughters for their fathers. If, as the above theory holds, the child's preference is usually for the parent of the opposite sex and the choice is genetically determined, then the filial preference pattern should be virtually the same

in all cultures. However, Nimkoff states: "One weakness of this Freudian psychology is its biological determinism and its failure to recognize adequately the role of culture as a conditioning agent in human personality," (Nimkoff, 1942, p. 518).

Simpson (1935), concerned with parent preference of young children, conducted a study of 500 children, five to nine years of age. Using indirect means of ascertaining filial preference, such as reactions to pictures and stories, preferences for the mother was expressed by 70 percent of the girls and 61 percent of the boys, while the father was favored by only 22 percent of the boys and 28 percent of the girls, with the exception of the five to six year olds, among whom 60 percent preferred the father.

To be identified with a strong parent can be an important source of security for a young child. Mussen and Rutherford (1963) support this by saying that a six year old boy feels proud as he watches his father defeat a rival in tennis. A young girl feels grown up as she puts her mother's apron on and attempts to bake a pie.

Each time the child perceives a basic similarity with the model the identification with the model is strengthened. Thus the child imitates parental behavior in order to increase the basic similarity between himself and the parent. (Mussen and Rutherford, 1963, p. 587)

Mussen and Distler (1959), Mower (1950), Sears (1956) suggest that both boys and girls form their first identification with a female, the mother, because she is likely to be the most gratifying and affectionate

person with whom the child has contact.

The developmental hypothesis states that identification with the father depends on a positive, affectionate relationship between father and son. If the father is an important source of nurturance reward and satisfaction, his responses and characteristics acquire secondary reward value and the boy imitates his father's behavior in order to "reproduce bits of the loved and longed for parent." (Mower, 1950, p. 615)

This point of view is supported by Mussen and Rutherford (1963); Mussen, Conger, and Kagan (1965); and Sears (1951); all of whom found masculinity to be related to the perception of the father as more rewarding and nurturant as well as being the more powerful source of punishment. They also found that femininity in little girls which is generally assumed to be a product, or manifestation, of identification with the mother, actually is related to rewarding nurturant and affectionate relationships with that parent.

Mussen and Rutherford (1963) hypothesized that strong parental encouragement of participation in sex appropriate activities would implement the feminization of girls and the masculinization of boys. When they gave the "It Scale For Children" test to $5\frac{1}{2}$ and $6\frac{1}{2}$ year old boys, their findings supported those of Mussen and Distler (1959), showing that young boys are more likely to identify strongly with their fathers, and thus acquire masculine interests, if they perceive their father as highly nurturant and rewarding.

A ruggedly masculine, self confident father who has poor relationships with his son is not likely to produce a highly

masculine son even if he actively attempts to stimulate his son's participation in typical male activities. (Mussen and Rutherford, 1963, p. 596)

Their findings are consistent with and support the developmental identification hypothesis which holds that girls will also identify strongly with their mothers and consequently become more feminine if they perceive their mothers as warm, nurturant, affectionate, and rewarding.

Nimkoff (1942) acknowledged that preference is a function of a particular situation and a child who awaits eagerly his father's homecoming because he prefers him as a playmate may run to his mother when he is hurt. A child may prefer his mother when he is small, his father when he is older, or vice versa.

The preference is for the parent who is most companionable and least censorious. For instance, the father will usually be preferred if he is a companion while mother is not, even if he is a strict disciplinarian and the mother is lenient. Where the mother is preferred she is generally described as the more sympathetic, understanding parent, while the father is the more distant and strict. The mother preference is also strong where the father is not an integral part of the family and where the responsibilities of the mother are particularly heavy. (Nimkoff, 1942, p. 520)

Teacher Preference In Young Children

Relatively little is known about the influence of male or female teachers on the lives of pre-school children. Few people have studied the effect of the teacher's sex upon the sex-role preferences and identification of young children.

American pre-schools developed the idea that they are somewhat of an extension of the home and that the teachers therefore should be good mother substitutes. Burt (1965) suggests that men teachers for young children have been encouraged for many years, at a point in the lives of children when a balanced relationship with a father-figure could have a positive effect in healthy personality development.

Kyselka (1966) supports this idea by saying "people are concerned about the lack of the male influence on the young child. According to some observers, Father has moved out of the American home and so has his influence," (Kyselka, 1966, p. 293).

Since both boys and girls form their first identification with a female, several authors, Kyselka (1966), Mussen and Distler (1959), Sears, Maccoby, and Levin, (1957) have pointed out that the pre-school child is probably at the best age to benefit from benign male influence, for it is at this age that he is forming his basic attitudes toward the world and the people in it. This is the time in his life that he is making the adjustment from the world of mother to a world of both masculine and feminine influences.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Forty children between the ages of three and five in the Utah State University Summer School Child Development Laboratory were observed in play situations for the purpose of studying children's sex-role preferences and identifications.

Children in two separate laboratories were observed, with 20 children in each; one with a male teacher, the other with a female teacher. In each laboratory under observation there were four student teachers. However, none of these teachers participated in this study, though they were involved in relationships with the children in other ways.

The 40 children, 20 in each group of boys and girls, were invited by the teacher, whether male or female, to participate in each of four planned activities. Of these activities, two were defined as being masculine and two as being feminine. Every child received two invitations, always from the same teacher, to participate in the activity. This resulted in eight invitations per child since each child was invited twice to participate in each of the four activities.

Every time a child was invited to participate in an activity, by either the female or male teacher, he was asked in the same way to enter that area of play. However, he could play with the materials provided for him in any way he wished and for any length of time.

Each laboratory session lasted two and one-half hours a day. The children in each of the two labs were observed four days a week, Monday through Thursday, for a period of five weeks. Throughout the entire five weeks, the same nursery school teacher, either male or female, followed through on the invitations.

The selection of the summer laboratory, rather than the Child Development Laboratory during the regular academic year, provided a wider variety of different backgrounds in the children. Their parents came to Utah State University from different parts of the country, and the world. The children came from different sections of the United States, plus one foreign country. The background, child-rearing practices, cultural expectations, and patterns of living of these children were all varied, bringing a varied sample of children with which to work.

Another favorable element in the selection of the summer laboratory was the fact that these children were all unfamiliar with each other. This minimized the factor of previous close peer influences and relationships, which might have determined the choices made by the children.

Four activities, two masculine and two feminine in orientation, were selected for studying sex preferences and identifications. The two feminine activities were "dressing up," and playing in the doll house area; the two masculine activities were riding the transportation vehicles, and woodworking.

All dress-up items were feminine wearing apparel including such

items as shoes, hats, dresses, blouses, purses, skirts, aprons, and scarves. The doll house area consisted of the kitchen (a sink, refrigerator, stove, cupboard, table and chairs, cooking and eating utensils, play food), and a bedroom with rocking chair, doll bed, doll carriage, doll dressing table, dolls and doll clothes.

The transportation vehicles included a jet transport airplane, a five car train, a cargo carrier (closed panel truck), a wooden horse, and a crane. These vehicles were all made of wood, about 10 inches high and sturdy enough to allow the children to ride on them.

Woodworking equipment consisted of hammers, nails, pounding log, and various sizes and shapes of wood which children could fasten together with nails. In this activity the children were free to build something or simply to pound for the sake of pounding as an activity in itself.

A companion study has been completed by Loa Thomson (1965) in which 20 of the 40 children discussed in this study were investigated under the influence of a female teacher. Her findings will be summarized in this study.

It is the purpose of this study to take the group of 20 children under the supervision of a male teacher and study their sex-role preferences and identifications. It will then be possible to compare the influence of the male teacher in this study and the female teacher in Thomson's study (1965) on the behavior patterns of children in the

Child Development Laboratory.

In an attempt to secure consistency, the approach in the activity invitations in this, and the companion study, was kept constant. Each invitation was expressed by each teacher in the same way: "Would you like to . . .?"

The writer remained in the observation booth, where it was possible to observe the invitations to the activities made by the teachers and the responses of the children. The child's acceptance or rejection of each invitation was noted on a score sheet (see Appendix). An acceptance denoted that the child had become involved in the activity either immediately or at a later time. A rejection showed that the child either had not become interested in the activity, or he had declined the invitation.

An acceptance of the masculine activities was scored masculine, and an acceptance of the feminine activities was scored as feminine. Conversely, a rejection on the feminine activities was scored as masculine, and a rejection on the masculine activities was scored as feminine.

By adding the separate feminine and masculine scores for the children's responses, it was possible to obtain a masculinity-femininity score for each child. Because of the eight invitations, the final masculinity-femininity scores ranged from complete masculine preference to complete feminine preference, with scores varying in between the

two extremes.

The analysis of the data was concerned primarily with comparing the actual scores and percentages of the two different groups.

FINDINGS

Findings Regarding Children With The Female Teacher

Loa Thomson's study (1965), which investigated the behavior of children with the female teacher, is summarized in this section.

Collective findings

The girls in this study scored higher in femininity than the boys, with 24 percent of the boys' responses being feminine and 56 percent of the girls' responses being feminine. Conversely, the boys scored higher in masculinity than the girls, with 76 percent of the boys' responses being masculine and 44 percent of the girls' responses being masculine. A comparison of the boys' feminine responses (24 percent) with the girls' masculine responses (44 percent) showed that the girls scored higher in masculinity than the boys did in femininity.

Four of the girls in the study (44 percent) exhibited no actual preference pattern, showing their willingness and security in becoming involved in both feminine and masculine activities; however, none of the boys followed this pattern, and with the exception of the one boy who exclusively preferred feminine activities, the boys all tended to choose activities appropriate for their own sex.

In general, 91 percent of the boys showed exclusive or nearly

exclusive masculine preferences in spite of the influence of the female teacher, while 44 percent of the girls showed exclusive or near-exclusive feminine preference.

To facilitate the presentation and discussion of the findings in this study, Table 1 and Table 2 were devised for reference and explanation. These two tables depict the boys' and girls' responses to the invitations to join in the masculine and feminine activities.

Doll corner. The doll corner consisted of the kitchen (a refrigerator, sink, stove, cupboard, table and chairs, cooking and eating utensils, and baby bathtub) and a bedroom arrangement (rocking chair, doll bed, doll carriage, doll dressing table, dolls, and doll clothes). The children could play with any part or parts in the doll house area, according to their own desires.

Of the nine girls in the study, seven of them (77 percent) elected to participate in the activity in response to both invitations. The other two girls (22 percent) accepted one invitation and declined the other. Not one girl rejected both invitations to play in the doll house area.

Of the 11 boys, five (45 percent) chose to reject the two invitations. Three (27 percent) accepted both the invitations and three (27 percent) accepted one and declined the other. Seventy-seven percent of the girls as compared to 27 percent of the boys participated in the activity on both invitations, suggesting that the boys felt less free

Table 1. Girls' responses to masculine and feminine activities with female teacher

Activity	Choice	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9
Doll house	Feminine	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
	Masculine								1	1
Dress up	Feminine	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Masculine	1								
Woodwork	Feminine	2		1	1				1	
	Masculine		2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2
Vehicles	Feminine	1	1							
	Masculine	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total	Feminine	6	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	3
	Masculine	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	5
Total feminine responses							40			
Total masculine responses							32			

to join in feminine activities. When the boys did become involved in the doll house area, it was during meal time as the father, brother, or grandfather. Only once was it observed that a boy cooperated in the preparation of the meal. All the acceptances of the boys were in the kitchen area; none of them were associated with the bedroom arrangements which called for such activities as putting a baby to bed or perhaps dressing a doll.

Table 2. Boys' responses to masculine and feminine activities with female teacher

Activity	Choice	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11
Doll house	Feminine						1	1	2	2	1	2
	Masculine	2	2	2	2	2	1	1			1	
Dress up	Feminine				1	1	1				2	2
	Masculine	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2		
Woodwork	Feminine							1				2
	Masculine	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	
Vehicles	Feminine											2
	Masculine	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total	Feminine	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	8
	Masculine	8	8	8	7	7	6	6	6	6	5	0
Total feminine responses								21				
Total masculine responses								67				

Dress up. Dressing up included such feminine clothing items as shoes, hats, skirts, dresses, blouses, aprons, purses, and scarves. Any combination the children wished to use was permissible. The children were simply invited, individually, to participate in the dress-up activity.

Of the nine girls, eight (89 percent) accepted both invitations

to join the activity; one (11 percent) accepted one and declined the other. Not one girl rejected both invitations. Of the 11 boys, six (55 percent) rejected both the invitations, three (27 percent) accepted one and declined the other, and two (18 percent) accepted both. Eighty-nine percent of the girls as compared to 18 percent of the boys participated in the activity upon both invitations, again suggesting the comparative lack of freedom felt by the boys to participate in feminine activities. The participating boys dressed in shoes, scarves, aprons, and purses. Only one observation described a boy who dressed in a skirt and blouse.

Woodwork. Woodworking included hammers, nails, pounding log, and various sizes and shapes of wood. The child was allowed to work with any or all of the materials he desired.

Of the 11 boys, nine (82 percent) accepted both invitations to join the activity, one boy (9 percent) accepted one and declined the other, and one (9 percent) rejected both invitations. Of the nine girls, five (55 percent) accepted both invitations, three (33 percent) accepted one and rejected the other, and one (11 percent) declined both invitations. Eighty-two percent of the boys as compared to 55 percent of the girls participated in the activity upon both invitations, with all but one of the girls becoming involved at least once with the activity. This comparatively high percentage of girls suggests the greater measure of permissiveness allowed the girls in involvement in

masculine activities.

Transportation vehicles. The transportation vehicles included a large jet transport, a five car train, a cargo carrier, a wooden horse, and a crane. These vehicles were all large enough and sturdy enough to allow the children to ride on them, or sit on them, with feet touching the floor to provide locomotion.

Of the 11 boys, 10 (91 percent) accepted both invitations to join into the activity and one (9 percent) declined both. Of the nine girls, seven (77 percent) accepted both invitations and two (22 percent) accepted one and declined the other. Ninety-one percent of the boys as compared to 77 percent of the girls participated in the activity upon both invitations, with all nine of the girls (100 percent) becoming involved at one time or another in the activity. This high percentage among the girls suggests the greater acceptance and freedom allowed girls in their sex-role behavior.

Findings Regarding Children Under the Influence

Of a Male Teacher

Collective findings

The boys scored higher in masculinity than the girls, with 78 percent of the boys' responses being masculine while only 45 percent of the girls had masculine scores. The girls in the study scored higher in femininity than the boys, with only 22 percent of the boys displaying

feminine responses while 55 percent of the girls' responses were feminine.

A comparison of the boys' feminine responses (22 percent) with the girls' masculine responses (45 percent) showed that the girls scored higher in masculinity than the boys did in femininity.

A comparison of the boys' masculine responses (78 percent) and the girls' feminine responses (55 percent) suggests that boys show a comparatively greater preference for the masculine role than the girls show for the feminine role.

The percentages suggest that girls of this age can identify more easily with either or both sexes than the boy is able to.

The findings of this study suggest that boys show a comparatively greater preference for the masculine role than the girls show for the feminine role. Even when girls have female teachers and models, their preferences for the female role is not as great as the boys' choice of the masculine role. Girls at this age level seem to be able to identify more easily with either or both sexes than the boy is able to do. With a total of 146 girls' responses, 74 were feminine. This is approximately 50 percent, which shows that they are equally able to participate in masculine and feminine activities. However, out of 184 total boys' responses, 144 proved to be masculine. This shows that even though a few boys do assume a feminine role, the majority prefer the masculine. Out of the 40 children in the study only two boys indicated almost

completely feminine orientation. One of the boys did enter the transportation activity upon the second invitation but apparently this was done only to please the teacher. He quickly left the activity as soon as the teacher departed. The remainder of the boys participated in each of the masculine activities at least on one invitation and most of them on both invitations. It was interesting to observe that more of the boys participated in the vehicle activity than in the woodworking. Of the 12 boys under the supervision of the male teacher, 11 accepted both invitations to ride the vehicles. One accepted one invitation and rejected the other. With the woodwork seven of the boys accepted both invitations while four accepted one and rejected one. One boy rejected both invitations. Under the invitation of the female teacher 10 of the 11 boys accepted both invitations to ride the vehicles. The other one rejected both invitations. Nine of the 11 accepted both invitations to enter the woodwork activity. One accepted one invitation and rejected the other, while one rejected both invitations.

Tables 3 and 4 were devised for reference and explanation to facilitate the presentation and discussion of the findings. These two tables depict the boys' and girls' responses to the invitations to join in the masculine and feminine activities arranged for them.

Transportation vehicles. The transportation vehicles include a jet transport airplane, a cargo carrier, a five car train, a wooden horse, and a crane. The vehicles were all large enough and sturdy

Table 3. Girls' response to masculine and feminine activities under male supervision

Activity	Choice	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8
Doll house	Feminine			2	2	2		2	2
	Masculine	2	2				2		
Dress up	Feminine	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2
	Masculine	1	1				1	1	
Woodwork	Feminine			2			2	2	1
	Masculine	2	2		2	2			1
Vehicle	Feminine		2	2					1
	Masculine	2			2	2	2	2	1
Total	Feminine	1	3	8	4	4	3	5	6
	Masculine	7	5		4	4	5	3	2
Total feminine responses						34			
Total masculine responses						30			

enough to allow the children to ride on them or sit on them with feet touching the floor to provide locomotion.

Of the 12 boys, 11 (92 percent) accepted both invitations to join into the activity and one (8 percent) declined both invitations.

Of the eight girls in the study, two (25 percent) accepted both invitations to join into the activity, five (56 percent) declined both

Table 4. Boys' response to masculine and feminine activities under male supervision

Activity	Choice	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12
Doll house	Feminine	2				1	1	2		1			1
	Masculine		2	2	2	1	1		2	1	2	2	1
Dress up	Feminine		1	1				2					
	Masculine	2	1	1	2	2	2		2	2	2	2	2
Woodwork	Feminine	2	1	1	1								1
	Masculine		1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
Vehicle	Feminine											1	
	Masculine	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
Total	Feminine	4	2	2	1	1	1	4		1		1	2
	Masculine	4	6	6	7	7	7	4	8	7	8	7	6
Total feminine responses								19					
Total masculine responses								77					

invitations, and one (12 percent) accepted one and declined the other.

Ninety-two percent of the boys as compared to 27 percent of the girls participated in the activity upon invitation by the male teacher.

Woodwork. Woodwork included hammers, nails, pounding log, and various sizes and shapes of wood. The child was allowed to work with one or all of the materials as he desired.

Of the 12 boys, seven (58 percent) accepted both invitations to join into the activity, four (33 percent) accepted one and declined the other, while one (8 percent) declined both invitations to work with the wood. This little fellow was the same child who refused the first invitation to ride the transportation vehicles and accepted the second invitation just long enough to please the teacher, but with no real desire to do so. He left the activity as soon as the teacher left the scene.

Of the eight girls, three (28 percent) accepted both invitations to join the activity, four (50 percent) rejected both invitations to join, and one (13 percent) rejected one invitation and accepted the other.

Ninety-two percent of the boys as compared to 50 percent of the girls participated in the activity upon invitation by the male teacher.

Doll house. The doll corner consisted of the kitchen which included: a refrigerator, sink, stove, cupboard, table and chairs, cooking and eating utensils. It was also equipped with a bedroom with a rocking chair, doll bed, doll carriage, doll dressing table, doll bath tub, dolls and doll clothes. The children could play with any part of the doll house areas, according to their own desires.

Of the 12 boys, two (17 percent) accepted both invitations to play in the doll house activity, six (50 percent) declined both invitations, and four (33 percent) accepted one invitation and rejected the other.

Of the eight girls included in the study, five (63 percent) accepted both invitations to join into the activity and three (28 percent) rejected both invitations.

Fifty percent of the boys as compared to 63 percent of the girls participated in the activity upon invitation by the male teacher.

Dress up. Dressing up included such feminine clothing items as dresses, blouses, aprons, purses, scarves, shoes, hats, and skirts. Any combination the children desired to use was permissible, as no specifications had been set.

Of the 12 boys, nine (75 percent) declined both invitations to accept this type of play activity, two (17 percent) declined one invitation and accepted the other, while one (8 percent) accepted both invitations.

Of the eight girls, four (50 percent) accepted both invitations to join the activity and four (50 percent) accepted one invitation and rejected the other one.

Twenty-five percent of the boys as compared to 100 percent of the girls participated in the activity upon invitation by the male teacher.

This study has been concerned with the influence of a male teacher on the sex-typed behavior of three and four year old children in the nursery school. Theoretically, a male or female teacher may influence the activity choices of these young children in several ways; the child's identification with the teacher may lead him to accept behavior

which appears to be accepted or valued by the teacher. He may choose to participate because the teacher has invited him to do so and he wants to please the teacher. Or, he may have wanted to engage in an activity that is not sex-appropriate and has been reluctant to do so because of his awareness of group pressures for conformity. The masculine teacher's invitation to him to participate in such an activity may serve as a liberating influence, enabling him to participate in an activity in which he has wanted to be involved but was unable to do so without a door-opening opportunity, such as the invitation from the teacher.

Comparative Findings Regarding

Male and Female Teacher

The findings of this study support two of the hypotheses listed below. The other two hypotheses are not supported by the findings. These findings are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Hypothesis Number I

Each child will select those activities traditionally defined as most appropriate for his sex.

This hypothesis was confirmed by the data. Boys do select those activities considered to be appropriate for them as males, and girls will also select those activities considered to be feminine.

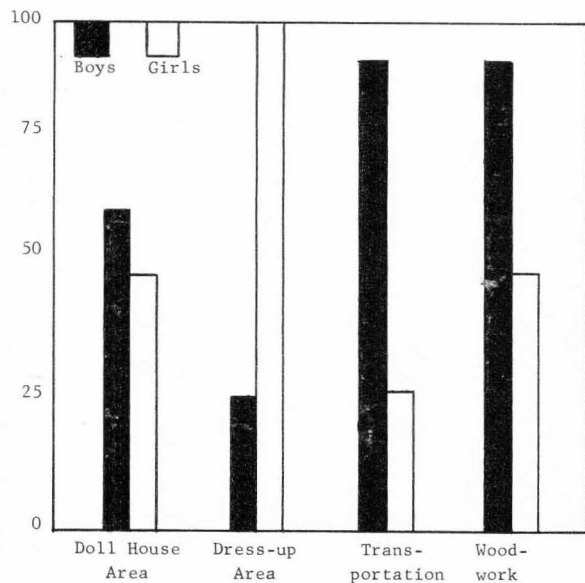


Figure 1. Comparison of the male and female teacher, participation by boys and girls under male teacher.

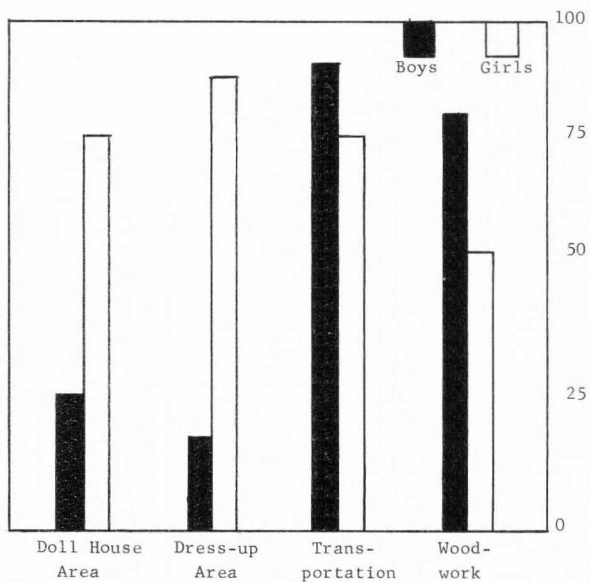


Figure 2. Comparison of the male and female teacher, participation by boys and girls under female teacher.

Hypothesis Number II

Both boys and girls will choose more masculine activities when invited by a male teacher than when invited by a female teacher.

The data collected in this study do not support this hypothesis. More girls chose masculine activities when invited by a female than when invited by a male. Only 27 percent of the girls chose the transportation area when invited by the male, as compared to 77 percent of the girls who participated in this same activity when invited by the female teacher. In the woodwork area the contrast was not so great; nevertheless, more girls responded to the female teacher than to the male, with 55 percent of the girls responding to the female compared to a 50 percent response to the male teacher.

More boys chose masculine activities when invited by male than when invited by the female teacher. In the doll house area 63 percent of the boys engaged in doll house activities when invited by the male teacher as compared to 27 percent of the boys participating when invited by a female teacher. Twenty-five percent of the boys participated in dress-up when invited by the male teacher as compared to 18 percent when invited by the female teacher. Most boys participated in the transportation vehicle activities with no apparent differences in response to the male or female teacher. In this area, 92 percent of the boys participated in response to the invitation from the male, as compared to 91 percent who took part in this activity in response to

an invitation from the female teacher. The pattern of boys' participation in the woodwork area was similar to that in the vehicle transportation, except for a mild reduction in responses to the invitation from the female teacher. In woodwork, 92 percent of the boys accepted the invitation from the male teacher, as compared to 82 percent who responded to the female teacher's invitation to take part in this activity.

Hypothesis Number III

Only girls will choose more feminine activities when invited by a female teacher than by a male.

The data do not support this hypothesis. In the doll house area, which is considered to be feminine, 63 percent of the boys chose to participate when invited by a male as compared to only 27 percent when invited by a female. In the dress-up clothing, 25 percent of the boys participated under invitation of the male while only 18 percent became involved when invited by the female.

Hypothesis Number IV

The girls in the study will choose more masculine activities than the boys will choose feminine and the boys will show a greater preference for the masculine role than the girls will for the feminine role.

The study supports this hypothesis. Girls do participate in more masculine activities than boys do in feminine and boys show a greater

preference for the masculine role than the girls show for the feminine role. Under the female teacher 77 percent of the girls participated in the transportation activity and 55 percent in the woodwork, while 27 percent of the boys participated in the doll house area with only 18 percent taking part in the dress-up activity. Under invitation from the male teacher 50 percent of the girls participated in the woodwork and 27 percent in the transportation areas.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In the Child Development Laboratory both boys and girls are using play to aid in the process of finding themselves as masculine or feminine persons. We find them acting out appropriate and inappropriate sex-role activities. By doing this they are attempting to discover just who they really are as individual persons. When choosing sex-appropriate roles they are identifying themselves with their own sex. When choosing or participating in sex-appropriate activities, they may be attempting to discover greater meaning in what it means to be themselves through the process of greater awareness of who they are not to be, or to become, as boys or as girls. It seems reasonable to assume, too, that they are becoming more fully aware of what it means to be a member of the opposite sex, through their participation in play in what we have described as sex-inappropriate activities.

Children vary in their understanding and development of proper sex-role identifications and preferences. However, even as early as age three in the Child Development Laboratory, children are beginning to show their awareness of appropriate or accepted sex-role behavior.

The girls were much more reluctant to enter the male activity when invited by a male teacher than when invited by a female, especially in the transportation area. For example, one little girl shyly looked at

the teacher, then at the vehicle, and turning again to the teacher said, "My brother plays with trucks." Then she walked away. When invited by the female teacher girls were not so reluctant. Perhaps the girls could interpret the invitation by the female teacher as saying, "It is alright for you to play with the masculine toys, because I'm a girl and I say you can." More of the girls felt more free, that is they were less hesitant, to engage in the woodwork than they did in the transportation activity. It may be that this is because woodwork is not as masculine-oriented as the transportation vehicles. From the time a child is born, trucks and trains are given to little boys with the idea that these are toys for boys. Woodwork is not seen so strongly in this way. Little girls as well as little boys see daddy hammering and they want to hammer, even if they do nothing less than to pound a nail in the block of wood. However, when it came to the amount of times the girls participated in these male activities more of the girls actually rode vehicles than pounded wood, but they did this with such reluctance that it seems evident that they were doing so primarily to please the teacher.

The girls participating in the masculine activities under the male teacher, were either all for femininity or all for masculinity, except for one little girl who accepted one invitation in each area. This particular girl was reluctant to take part but did so, apparently, to please the teacher. She really did not enjoy either the woodwork or the transportation activity and never showed any signs of pleasure

during the entire time she stayed with the activities. Generally speaking, the girls either wanted nothing at all to do with the activity or were excited about being asked to participate in "boys" play.

It was evident in observing the children that boys are more masculine and prefer more masculine activities than the girls are feminine and will choose feminine activities. This however, does not restrict the boys from playing feminine roles or engaging in feminine activities. Two of the 23 boys in the study had completely feminine scores. Exposure to such experiences may help these boys to find appropriate sex-roles through identifying with a masculine male or maybe by simply acting out both the feminine and masculine roles which they need to learn and understand more about.

Boys, when invited to enter the feminine activities were much more reluctant to enter the "dress-up" area than they were to enter the "doll house." The few boys who did "dress up" used only the shoes and hats, except for one little three year old boy who liked to play in the doll house area. Here he would dress up in heels, skirt, blouse, and hat. He really didn't care if he played alone or with someone, but he enjoyed this activity. He was often observed going to the store to buy some food for the kitchen, and he loved to make breakfast. This particular boy participated freely in both masculine and feminine play.

In the doll house area the boys seemed to be more free. Here they could play the role of daddy, brother, grandfather and still not be

losing their proper identity. One little boy would always enter the doll house area when a group of girls were playing with the exclamation, "You need a daddy. I'll be one!"

It did not bother the boys who played in the doll house to bathe the dolls, dress them, and push them around in the doll carriage. They would simply say, "I'm taking the baby for a walk." However, when asked if they wanted to dress up to take the baby for a walk, they immediately answered "No." In the doll house, playing a feminine role, they did not seem to feel as conspicuous or out of their proper sex-role pattern as when dressed up in female clothing.

More boys participated in the doll house area and with the dress-up clothing when invited by a male teacher than when invited by a female. This could suggest that boys feel more free to do this type of activity when encouraged by a male. An invitation by the male could mean to them, "this activity is alright for little boys." The boys seemed to participate more in the activities when asked by the teacher of the same sex, except in the transportation vehicles activity, in which over 90 percent of the boys took an active part in response to an invitation from either a female or male teacher.

Some of the children did not know how to use the hammer and this could have been one of the reasons for more reluctance to take part in this activity by both boys and girls.

It did not matter so much to the girls which sex invited them into

the activity, as girls of this age seem to be more flexible than boys in role play. However, more girls participated in the dress-up clothing when invited by a male but played more with transportation and woodwork when invited by a female. This would seem to indicate that even though girls may be femininely-oriented they will still accept masculine activities more freely when invited by a female.

During this early childhood period children gradually realize that they are becoming masculine or feminine persons. They are beginning to learn what is and what is not appropriate for their own sex-role behavior, and are accepting those activities appropriate for their own sex.

Perhaps the most interesting and provocative finding of this study is that which indicates that boys are much more free to participate in feminine activities when invited to do so by a male. The girls in this study indicated no similar dependence upon the female teacher as an enabling agent to provide opportunities for them to engage in masculine-oriented play activities. This seems to be particularly interesting in view of the fact that our society has been so much more permissive in permitting girls to enjoy greater freedom in sex-role patterns of behavior. Greater permissiveness is granted to girls in dress, play, and general behavior than is usually granted to boys. Boys may well feel this restrictiveness, and accept it reluctantly. It seems that the data may suggest that boys may wish for opportunities to engage in play

activities which they feel are outside the realm of what is acceptable for them as boys in the process of becoming masculine persons. In such situations, an invitation from a male teacher to engage in a play activity which is femininely-oriented may be a liberating opportunity to enable the boy not to become feminine, but to act out his interests in such play. In the process he may well become more aware of what it means to be both masculine and what it means to be feminine, and become more aware, also, of the meaning of femininity to girls. As more is learned about the meaning of feminine-oriented play for boys, it may become possible for our society to reduce some restrictions on the play activities of young boys. In any event, the findings do suggest the importance of providing a larger number of male teachers for young children.

Limitations

1. The study did have some limitations in as much as the previous experiences of the children, in such activities, could not be determined. Therefore, this influence on the children's choices was not known.

2. Another limitation of the study is a product of the nature of the group of children. The children who participated in the study were selected casually from among the total group in the nursery school. Most children in the summer laboratory did participate in the study, but no attempt was made to have the participants be fully representative of

the laboratory population. Also, the children in the summer laboratory represent only themselves, and are not a representative group of any kind.

3. One male and one female teacher was used in the study. Neither of these teachers can be classed as being representative of other teachers of the same sex. The personality of the teacher, whether male or female, could make a substantial difference in how the children react to their invitations to participate in a particular activity. The influence of the personality of the teachers was not investigated.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

Four hypothesis for the study were formed:

1. Each child will select these activities traditionally defined as most appropriate for his sex.
2. Both boys and girls will choose more masculine activities when invited by a male teacher than when invited by a female teacher.
3. Only girls will choose more feminine activities when invited by a female teacher than by a male.
4. The girls in the study will choose more masculine activities than the boys choose feminine and the boys will show a greater preference for the masculine role than the girls will for the feminine role.

Forty children, 23 boys and 17 girls, between the ages of three and five were observed in the Utah State University Child Development Laboratory for the purpose of studying their sex-role preferences and identifications. Four activities, two feminine and two masculine in orientation, were selected for the children to participate in. Every child received two invitations to join in each of the four masculine and feminine activities. As a result of their acceptance or rejection of these invitations, a masculinity-femininity score was developed

for each of the children. Two tables were developed which depicted the girls' and boys' responses to the masculine and feminine activities. The children were always invited to engage in the activity by the same teacher and in the same way. They were observed from the observation booth by the author of this study, where each child was scored according to his reactions to the invitations.

The findings of this study support two of the hypotheses proposed; the other two are not supported by the findings.

1. Hypothesis number one was supported by the findings. Boys do tend to select those activities considered to be appropriate for them as males, and the girls tend to select those activities considered to be feminine.

2. Hypothesis number two was not supported in the findings of the study. The study showed more girls choosing masculine activities when invited by a female than when invited by a male. Only 27 percent of the girls when invited by the male chose transportation as compared to 77 percent of the girls when invited by a female teacher. In the wood-work activity 50 percent of the girls participated when invited by the male as compared to 55 percent when asked by the female. More boys did choose more masculine activities when invited by the male.

3. Hypothesis number three was not supported by the findings. In the doll house area which is considered to be feminine, 63 percent of the boys chose to participate when invited by a male teacher as compared

to 27 percent when invited by a female teacher. In the dress-up area, 25 percent of the boys participated under invitation of the male while only 18 percent became involved when invited by the female.

4. Hypothesis number four was supported by the findings in the study affirming that girls will choose more masculine activities than the boys will choose feminine. The boys showed a greater preference for the masculine role than the girls did for the feminine role. Girls, however, are more flexible and will accept either masculine or feminine activities more quickly than boys will.

Conclusions

1. Children are aware, early in life, of appropriate and inappropriate sex-role behavior.

2. Both male and female teachers have important contributions to make in the discovery of sex-role preferences and identifications of young children.

3. From the data in this study, it may be tentatively concluded that boys and girls differ from each other in their responses to sex typing, and sex-role preferences.

4. Both the attitudes and the sex of the adult with whom children live and associate have a bearing, or an influence, on the sex-role preferences of both boys and girls.

5. From the boy's responses to the male teacher's invitations to

engage in feminine play it may be concluded that their interests in sex-role activities are less restricted than is suggested by their behavior.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Not enough is known about the influence that teachers have on the lives of children. On the basis of the present investigation it is suggested that the following studies may be beneficial in studying sex-typing and sex identifications of young children.

1. Further studies need to investigate the influence of male and female teachers on sex-role preferences and the sex-typing of young children.

2. A similar study of children's awareness of appropriate or inappropriate sex-role behavior, made from the standpoint of verbal responses from the children, or permitting children to tell what it means to them to be masculine or feminine.

3. The child who perceives major elements of similarity to the parent of the same sex will initially regard himself as masculine or feminine. A study of home influences, parental attitudes, child rearing practices, occupation of parents and educational level of the family would seem to be beneficial in determining how and when sex-role patterns and orientation begin to develop in children at home.

4. Failure to develop the masculine or feminine skills valued by

the peer culture often leads to peer rejection among children. A study concerning peer influence, sex and ages of peers, previous play associations of children, age and sex of other siblings in the home would enlighten our understanding of how children perceive themselves and identify with their own sexes.

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APPENDIX

SEX REFERENCE AND IDENTIFICATION IN CHILDREN

Summer, 1965

Child's name _____

Sex _____ Present age _____ years, _____ months

Feminine Activities: Feminine Masculine

Doll House

Dress Up

(Feminine = acceptance; masculine = rejection)

Masculine Activities:

Woodwork, hammering

Transportation Vehicles

(Masculine = acceptance; feminine = rejection)

Masculine and feminine score, Total:

MasculineFeminine