Stereotypical and prosocial behaviors

Name

Institution
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The examination of two- and three-year old children, conducted by Kuhn, Churnin Nash, & Brucken (1978) showed that already at such an early age children are capable to differentiate sex roles and can understand the stereotypes in the society. They are aware that these stereotypes differ according to the subject, who is also aware of his gender. Although children, who showed identity with opposite sex, didn’t have any stereotypes: they didn’t differentiate themselves according to age or sex. However, the overall conclusion states that each sex usually prescribes positive features to their own gender and negative – to the opposite one.

I decided that this study could be interesting and useful for the society, because it can reveal the tendencies and give everyone a chance to have a side-glance on the community we live in. It was important to learn more about the age at which children start picking up gender roles. It will be also interesting to see how the data differs according to different times and geographical borders. There are countries, which are patriarchal and matriarchal, countries where women stay at home and take care of the household and regions, when the responsibilities are shared equally. Even inside the US, it will be interesting to see how different states show various results on stereotypical and prosocial behaviors.

The study revealed multiple interviews and examinations on preferences of sex roles. Children needed to answer some questions, which were created to show their sex identity and social behavior. However, there are many questions, which call these interviews in question. For example, the last question of session 4 was ‘Who do you like more? Lisa or Michael?’ and ‘Who do you want to be like – Lisa or Michael?’ But these questions should be considered only on the background of a previous question, where children needed to tell about personal traits of dolls. If a girl finds a male-doll Michael a positive example, she will probably answer ‘Michael’, because she wants to possess the same positive features. It doesn’t mean that she identifies herself with the opposite sex. What if children had a chance to choose both dolls? Would it influence the outcome of the study? Children, who identify themselves with an opposite gender, can be subdivided into a separate group to see how they compare themselves with other children.

The second processed article was written by Eisenberg, Lennon & Ross (1983) and gives an overview on prosocial development. It was very interesting to learn more about the levels of prosocial reasoning and the times when they usually develop. This research will be easy to conduct and see how children behave in a usual environment.

It becomes clear that children of younger age make decisions based on what they were told and they don’t think whether it is good or bad. However, they tend to base their behavior on morals when they get older. But are there many people, who complete actions not out of the fear of being punished?
However, I think that the research is not completely correct, because it was conducted in isolated rooms and all the participants were examined individually, while the influence of the society is undoubtful. Most of us base decisions on the opinion of our friends or family, so it is important to conduct such a research again in a group to see how the results may change.
STEREOTYPICAL AND PROSOCIAL BEHAVIORS

References
