



Gender Inequalities in Playthings: An Investigation of Toy Selection and Usage

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INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality arises when prejudice based on sex or gender results in one group having preferential treatment or benefits over another. Gender equality, on the other hand, is a fundamental human right that is violated by any form of gender discrimination.

Gender disparity in toys is a critical issue that has been extensively studied in recent years. One of the most critical components of this problem is the way toys are sold and pushed to children. Many toys are still marketed in ways that reinforce gender stereotypes, with girls getting dolls and cosmetics while boys get action figures and construction sets. This can limit children's access to a wide range of hobbies and activities while reinforcing gender stereotypes. Gender disparities affect many aspects of daily life, including the toys that children play with. Gender differences play an important role in toys, and social interactions impact opinions of how they should be classed. A trip to the toy store often exposes how gender differences considerably impact toy choosing, as well as how the types of toys vary by gender. In today's world, it's usual to see gender differences between toys for boys and girls.

It is commonly observed that gender differences influence children's toy interests and choices. Numerous studies indicate that, on average, boys tend to show more interest in action figures and sporting equipment—often labeled as "boys' toys" or masculine toys. Girls, on the other hand, tend to choose toys like baby dolls and princess gowns, which are commonly labeled as "girls' toys" or feminine toys by society.

Before interacting with others, children usually make similar choices. However, external factors, notably the manner in which items are sold to youngsters, frequently drive them to conform to a rigid gender binary. This obedience may severely limit their future opportunities, even making toys a subject of disagreement for children whose interests differ from established gender norms and heterosexist views.

Given that these gender discrepancies are not inherent, ending the use of imagined gender differences in toy promotion might be an important step toward eradicating gender inequity and the rigid gender binary. Steps such as portraying all children engaging with a diverse array of toys in advertisements—eschewing the linking of specific traits with particular genders—and eliminating labels like "boys' toys" and "girls' toys," alongside removing gendered color distinctions (e.g., associating blue with boys and pink with girls) from store toy aisles, could substantially contribute to destigmatizing toys. These initiatives would aid in the fight against sexist prejudice and segregation, both of which pose serious threats to the future psychological happiness of today's youngsters.

Toys intended to boys frequently emphasize aggressiveness, activity, and excitement, whereas those directed at girls generally contain pinkish colours and emphasize passiveness, attractiveness, and nurture. This division was not always the norm; around the turn of the 20th century, toys were generally not marketed distinctly according to gender.

Assigning gender-specific labels to toys can heighten anxiety in children who fear choosing the "wrong" toy. Before the age of 3, children typically play with whatever toy is available to them. Parents and other adults around them often inadvertently convey gender cues to children.

Nor is the toy industry doing any favors either in this department by not appropriately representing non-binary or gender non-conforming people. Toy makers

can still be assumed to privilege the gender binary reinforcement of stereotypes and biases, thereby they continue providing only limited choices by which- toys will no longer interest males or females, but people. This may be done through lobbying efforts, educational activities, and the promotion of diverse and accessible toys in both communities and schools. Toy makers may also help foster gender parity by providing a varied choice of toys for both genders and advertising their products in an open and egalitarian manner. Gender-inclusive toys are designed to encourage unlimited playtime, allowing children to try new things and learn from their errors, which is extremely useful. Gender-neutral toys allow children to pursue their passions based on their own choices rather than society norms.

It is essential to involve young individuals in conversations about gender equality in play. Educators, parents, toy manufacturers, and children must work together to teach kids to be mindful of their toys and media influences, which can help them become activists for a fairer and more inclusive society and reduce gender disparities in toys.

Toys are instrumental in the construction of a child's notion as to what man and woman should be, which effectively limits his or her future possibilities. Girl products like dolls tend to expose them sexualization and unrealistic beauty standards, meanwhile boy's toys play a role as promoting unhealthy masculine traits (aggressive, powerful) understanding the Role Toys Play in a Child's Growth.