

# ON-LINE APPENDIX A: ANNOTATED PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH REPORT

Running Head: PERCEIVED SEX AND EMOTIONAL JUDGEMENT

Stereotyping in play:

The role of children's perceived sex in judgements of their emotions

A. Student

University of Yourtown

Word count:	Abstract	144 words
	Text	1,443 words
	References	108 words
	Other	75 words
	Total	1,770 words

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**Comment [1]:** This is a shortened version of the paper's title and should be placed in the Header, along with the page number, in all subsequent pages. It should be less than 50 characters long.

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**Comment [2]:** Title is centred. The key thing is that the title should capture succinctly what the study was about. The second part of the title here does this well and would probably suffice on its own. However, the first part gives some general sense of the topic, and is designed to capture the reader's attention.

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**Comment [3]:** In this case the word limit applied to the text of the report (i.e., not including the Abstract, References and Appendices), but your instructors may have different rules. Make sure you are familiar with these and stick to them.

**Abstract**

Many studies have identified sex differences in children's behaviour. However, some of these differences may be the result of stereotypic expectations about the behaviour of girls and boys. The purpose of this study was to determine whether the perceived sex of a child does in fact affect perceptions of its emotional reactions. Undergraduate students ( $N = 215$ ) viewed a videotape of an infant's emotional responses to various stimuli. Half were told the infant was a boy, half that it was a girl. Participants were then asked to rate the emotional reactions of the child. Consistent with the findings of Condry and Condry (1976), the child was generally perceived to be more emotional when it was thought to be a boy. Findings suggest that sex differences revealed by observational studies in which the raters know the sex of the child should be treated with caution.

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**Comment [4]:** The Abstract is placed on a page of its own. This is centred but not bolded.

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**Comment [6]:** Do not indent the first line of the abstract

## Stereotyping in play:

The role of children's perceived sex in judgments of their emotions

Several studies of children have shown that the behavioural and emotional characteristics of young boys differ from those of girls. For example, Fagot (1974) found that boys exhibited a higher degree of motor activity and object manipulation than girls, while girls engaged in more verbal communication. Cramer (1970) observed that 3- to 7-year-old boys were more aggressive and impulsive than girls, who displayed a greater degree of self-control. Jerseld and Holmes (1935, as cited in Condry & Condry, 1976) found that toddler girls expressed a higher degree of fear in response to fear-provoking stimuli than did boys.

Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) have proposed that some of these sex differences may be due to a process of shaping whereby adults only encourage behaviour seen to be appropriate for the child's sex. This explanation assumes that adults have differential expectations regarding the appropriate behaviour for boys and girls. However, it has also been argued that the existence of such differential expectations may also bias observers so that they exaggerate the extent to which boys and girls behave differently (Cooper, 1974).

As with most findings of sex differences, the studies mentioned above used observational methods to rate the behaviour of the child. With this technique, the child's sex is usually known to the observer. Accordingly, it is possible that ratings may be influenced by the observer's own expectations of sex-appropriate behaviour (Cooper, 1974).

In order to determine whether rated sex differences are influenced by the expectations of the observer, Condry and Condry (1976) asked observers to make judgements of the behaviour of a single child. Observers watched a videotape of the

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**Comment [8]:** Note that there is no heading for the Introduction

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**Comment [9]:** Note formatting of 'and' as '&' inside brackets

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**Comment [10]:** Note that a compound adjective (here, "sex-appropriate" is hyphenated when it qualifies a noun (here "behaviour") that comes after it. Thus you would write "the group had low status" but "this was a low-status group".

child's responses to a number of stimuli and then rated the degree to which they thought each of three different emotions (fear, anger, and pleasure) was present in the child's response. Half the participants were told that they were watching a boy, and half were told that they were watching a girl. When the ratings were aggregated across stimuli and type of emotion, it was found that the child was rated as showing a higher overall level of emotional response if thought to be a boy. Evidence that perceptions of behaviour are influenced by sex stereotypes was also found. When the child was presented with a stimulus which produced a negative, but ambiguous, emotion, the child was rated as more aggressive if perceived to be a boy, but as more fearful if perceived to be a girl.

This experiment attempted to replicate the basic pattern of findings reported by Condry and Condry (1976). Following their results, it was predicted that the perceived sex of the child would influence observers' ratings of its emotional reactions. Specifically, it was hypothesized that a child believed to be a boy would be perceived to be more emotional than one believed to be a girl.

### Method

#### Participants

The participants were 226 undergraduate psychology students attending scheduled laboratory sessions. Of these 139 were women and 87 were men. Data from 11 students (7 women, 4 men) who had read the course manual before the class were not included in subsequent analysis.

#### Design

The independent variable was the sex attributed to the child (male or female). This factor was manipulated between-subjects, with participants randomly assigned to groups. The dependent variable was the rated level of emotional reactivity.

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**Comment [11]:** The Introduction concludes with a clear statement of the study's key goals and hypotheses.

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**Comment [12]:** This is a Level 1 heading: **Bold**, centred, and on a line of its own

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**Comment [13]:** This is a Level 2 heading: **Bold**, left-justified, and on a line of its own.

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**Comment [14]:** Note that if this (or any other) section had further subsections, these would have Level 3 Headings and these would be **Bold** and indented and on a line of their own. If necessary, further subsections would have Level 4 (**bold**, indented, *italicized*, and on a line of their own) and then Level 5 headings (**bold**, indented, *italicized*, ending with a full stop, but with text continuing on the same line)

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**Comment [15]:** Numbers greater than 10 are written as digits.

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**Comment [16]:** Numbers less than ten are normally written as words, unless (as here) they are part of a series of numbers some of which are greater than ten.

## Materials and Procedure

Participants were randomly allocated to one of two groups, with each group receiving a different instruction sheet (see Appendix A). Half of the participants were informed that the child was a girl; the other half were told it was a boy. Participants were required to transfer information about the child, including its sex, from their instruction sheet to a rating sheet. This allowed the attributed sex of the child to be manipulated without the experimenter having to state the child's sex publicly.

When they had all done this, participants watched a video depicting a 9-month-old child reacting to five presentations of each of five emotionally arousing stimuli. The stimuli were a toy wombat, a toy rabbit, a toy bear, a jack-in-the-box, and a strange noise. Immediately following the five presentations of each stimulus, participants rated the child's response to that stimulus on three dimensions indicating the amount of pleasure, anger, and fear displayed by the child. Responses were made on 11-point rating scales ranging from 0 (indicating that no emotion was displayed) to 10 (indicating a great deal of emotion).

## Results

The data consisted of ratings of the degree of fear, anger, and pleasure shown by the child in response to each stimulus. Ratings were averaged across the presented objects and types of emotion to give a global measure of emotional reaction. Means and standard deviations for these global ratings are presented in Table 1 as a function of the attributed sex of the child.

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Table 1

Global Ratings of Emotional Reaction as a Function of a Child's Attributed Sex

Attributed sex	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Male	10	64.20	1.31
Female	10	92.43	1.02

From this table it can be seen that ratings of emotion were higher when the child was thought to be a boy ( $M = 4.20$ ) than when it was thought to be a girl ( $M = 2.43$ ). A between-subjects  $t$ -test indicated that this difference was significant,  $t(213) = 10.92, p < .001$ . Details of  $t$ -test calculations are presented in Appendix B.

**Discussion**

The aim of this experiment was to see whether ratings of a child's emotionality would be affected by its perceived sex. As hypothesized, the results indicate that a child was rated as more emotional when it was thought to be a boy than when it was thought to be a girl. This pattern replicates Condry and Condry's (1976) findings and supports their conclusion that the perceived sex of a child can influence ratings of its behaviour.

There are two key implications of this finding. First, it serves to question the validity of sex differences reported in rating studies where the observers are aware of a child's sex (e.g., Cramer, 1970; Fagot, 1974). The present results raise the possibility that such findings may reflect observers' expectations, based on sex stereotypes, rather than genuine behavioural differences. Evidence that this stereotypic biasing can occur is also provided by Condry and Condry's (1976) finding that, when presented with a buzzer as a stimulus, their "boy" was rated as showing anger, while their "girl" was rated as showing fear. It is possible that similar results

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**Comment [18]:** Decisions about whether to present data as a Figure or a Table are complex, but the key issue is that you should use the format that allows the reader to grasp most easily what it is that you found in your research. If there is not much information (as here) it does not make much sense to present this in graphical form. Indeed, in this instance the data could easily be incorporated into the text of the Results section.

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**Comment [19]:** Captions are placed above tables, with the title italicized and the first letter of key words capitalized.

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**Comment [20]:** If this were a graph, it would have the title "*Figure 1: Global ratings of emotional reaction as a function of child's attributed sex*" and this would be placed below the graph.

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**Comment [21]:** Note that Table does not include lines.

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**Comment [22]:** You should use exact  $p$ -values unless  $p$  is less than .001 (this is indicated by  $p = .000$  in SPSS output)

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**Comment [23]:** This is a Level 1 heading: **Bold**, centred, and on a line of its own

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**Comment [24]:** Start by reminding reader what the aim of the research was.

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**Comment [25]:** One of the most common grammatical errors is to write the possessive "its" as "it's". Note however, that "it's" does not mean "of it" but is short for "it is".

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**Comment [26]:** Then indicate what your key findings were and how these relate to your hypotheses.

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**Comment [27]:** Then go on to discuss theoretical and practical implications

would be obtained from more fine-grained analysis of the data collected in the present study (i.e., based on separate analysis of scores on different measures rather than a global measure of emotional reaction) and this should be examined in future studies.

Second, the present findings suggest that biases in the interpretation of a child's behaviour may contribute to subsequent shaping of that behaviour into sex-appropriate forms, along lines suggested by Maccoby and Jacklin (1974). For example, a boy who cries may be treated by his parents as if he is angry, while a girl may be treated as if she is afraid. It is worth noting that Rothbart and Maccoby (1966) actually found that the pattern of such shaping also depended on the sex of the observer: fathers were more permissive with a child they thought was a girl, while mothers were more permissive with a child they thought was a boy. In future research it might therefore also be interesting to see whether the pattern of results obtained in the present study varies as a function of the observer's sex.

### Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the apparent sex of a child can influence adults' perception of that child's behaviour. This casts doubt on findings of sex differences in studies where the observer knows the sex of the child and raises the possibility that sex-based biases in the interpretation of behaviour may contribute to shaping of children's behaviour. Clearly this suggests that it might be necessary for future research to replicate important findings of sex differences in studies where the observer remains unaware of the child's sex in order to establish the reliability of those effects and the validity of received interpretations of them.

However, it is worth noting that one important limitation of this study was that the participants were students who may have had limited previous experience as observers of children's behaviour. This fact may reduce the study's external validity

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**Comment [28]:** Make sure that you include suggestions for future research at some point in the Discussion.

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**Comment [29]:** It can be good to end with a pithy conclusion (or "**Concluding Comment**") that ties up the report and gives it a punchy ending. In longer reports you may also include other subheadings (e.g., "**Limitations and Future Research**"). This is a Level 2 heading.

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because similar results might not emerge if participants had greater expertise. For this reason, it would seem prudent to conduct further research to see whether the same biases that emerged in this study also emerge in ratings provided by participants with more direct experience of young children's behaviour. To this end, future studies might attempt to replicate the present study using parents and/or developmental experts as participants.

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**Comment [31]:** This is a fair enough conclusion to the paper, but it is not especially exciting. If at all possible, it is good to end a paper with a powerful positive statement that conveys your enthusiasm for the subject matter.



### References

Condry, J., & Condry, S. (1976). Sex differences: A study of the eye of the beholder.

*Child Development*, 7, 812-819.

Cooper, E. S. (1974). Direct observation? *Bulletin of the British Psychological Society*, 27, 3-7.

Cramer, B. (1970). Some sex differences in children between three and seven.

*Psychosocial Processes*, 6, 60-76.

Fagot, B. I. (1974). Sex differences in toddlers' behaviour and parental reaction.

*Developmental Psychology*, 10, 554-558.

Maccoby, E. M., & Jacklin, C. N. (1974). *The psychology of sex differences*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Rothbart, M. K., & Maccoby, E. E. (1966). Parents' differential reactions to sons and daughters. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 4, 237-243.

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**Comment [32]:** References start on a new page. This is a Level 1 heading.

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**Comment [33]:** Reference list only includes material cited in the text. They are listed alphabetically and have a hanging indent.

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**Comment [34]:** Note full stop after the date.

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**Comment [35]:** Note journals have the first letter of key words capitalized.

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**Comment [36]:** Note title and volume number italicized.

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**Comment [37]:** Note book titles only have the first letter of the first word capitalized.

**Appendix**

**A. Instruction sheets**

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**B. SPSS output**

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**Comment [42]:** Here you would include relevant output. Taking a screen grab (as we do throughout the book) may be neater and easier than copying and pasting this material.