

Abstract

Muhammad Sa'id Rihawi, M. A., University of Jordan;
August, 1978. "The Effects of Sex, and Social Power
of the Model, and the Child's Sex in Eliciting
Imitated Incidental Behavior From the Child".
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Various learning theories such as social learning theory (Bandura & Walters, 1963), psychoanalytic theories, and role-learning theories have emphasized the role of the model in eliciting imitated responses from the child. These theories were able to determine a number of variables which affect the tendency of the child to imitate the model. Such variables are: Sex of the model, the model's social power and the sex of the child. Results of the studies dealing with the effects of these variables on imitated behavior were equivocal and at times contradictory.

This study tried to shed some light on these variables. Accordingly the problem of this study has been stated as follows = What is the effect of sex and social power of the model, and the child's sex in eliciting imitated incidental responses from first-grade children in the government schools in Amman".

Seven hypotheses were tested. These were:-

- 1- There is no significant difference between the mean score of children's imitation of a male model and that of a female model.
- 2- Boys imitate a male model significantly more than they imitate a female model.
- 3- Girls imitate a female model significantly more than they imitate a male model.

- 4- Children imitate a dominant model significantly more than they imitate a passive model.
- 5- Boys imitate a dominant female model significantly more than they imitate a passive male model.
- 6- There is no significant difference between girls' imitation of a dominant male model and of the passive female model.
- 7- There is not significant difference between the mean score of boy's and girls' imitation of incidental behavior.

To test these hypotheses 100 first-grade children were randomly chosen from government schools in Amman. The subjects were distributed into a control group, which has not observed a model (N=20), and an experimental group that has observed a model (N=30). Each subject in the experimental group participated in an initial interaction with a male model and a female one, one of the two models being dominant and the other passive. These subjects were divided into two subgroups: in the first, the male model was dominant and the female was passive (as in the husband-dominant family), while in the second the female model was dominant and the male model was passive (as in the wife dominant family).

All 30 subjects observed one of the models while performing a discrimination task during which he/she demonstrated some behaviors incidental to the task. Half of the subjects observed the male model, while the other half observed the female model. Two observers recorded the children's incidental responses resembling those of the model while observing the Subjects through a one-way mirror.

Three way-analysis of variance ($2 \times 2 \times 2$) and "t" tests have been used to analyse the Results of this study. Statistical analysis of the results showed that both boys and girls in the

experimental groups imitated the model in all experimental situations in comparison with the control group. The results supported the first hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between children's imitation of the male model and their imitation of the female model. The results also showed that boys imitated the male model significantly more than they imitated the female model, thus supporting the second hypothesis. The results did not support the third hypothesis since there was no significant difference between girls' imitation of a female model and that of a male one.

Children imitated the dominant model more than the passive model, and boys imitated the female dominant model more than the passive male model. This is in support of the fourth and fifth hypotheses.

The sixth hypothesis was not supported since girls imitated the male dominant model more than they imitated the female passive model.

The results supported the seventh hypothesis which indicated that there was not significant difference between boys and girls in their imitation of incidental behavior.