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ABSTRACT

The Sex Stereotype Measure II (SSM II), a 32-item picture-story technique, was developed to assess children's knowledge of conventional, adult-defined, sex-trait stereotypes. The procedure was based on stereotype characteristics identified by college students using the Adjective Check List item pool. A second procedure, the Sex Attitude Measure (SAM), was developed to assess general evaluative bias toward male and female persons. Both procedures were composed of brief stories presented with human figure silhouettes to preschool, third, and sixth grade Euro-American children. Both the male and female stereotypes were found to increase linearly with age, with more male traits than female traits being known to each age level. Item analyses revealed differences in the age at which children become aware of various stereotype traits, with the learning of some traits still incomplete at age 12. Although there was generally good agreement between boys and girls, there were some apparent sex differences in acquisition of knowledge of certain items. The SAM scores indicated no age-related effects and at all three age levels girls were clearly pro-female and anti-male, while boys were unbiased toward females and only slightly anti-male. No consistent relationship was found between sex-stereotype knowledge and evaluative sex bias. It was concluded that the SSM II was a useful procedure for the study of the existence of sex stereotypes in a variety of populations and for investigations of the determinants of sex-trait stereotype learning. (Author/MS)

Development of Sex-Trait Stereotypes Among Young Children in the United States, England, and Ireland

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Abstract

The Sex Stereotype Measure II (SSM II), a 32-item revision of the Williams, Bennett and Best Sex Stereotype Measure, was developed to assess children's knowledge of conventional, sex-trait stereotypes defined by American university students. The procedure employed brief stories and human figure silhouettes which were individually administered to 5- and 8-year-old children in the United States, England, and Ireland and group administered to 11-year-olds in the United States. In the United States, knowledge of sex-trait stereotypes was found to develop in a linear fashion between the ages of 5 and 11 with more male traits than female traits being known at each age level. Cross-nationally, there was a high degree of similarity in the nature of the sex stereotypes being learned by the children in the three countries, although the rate of learning appeared slower among the Irish children. In all countries, there was a clear progression in sex-stereotype learning from age 5 to age 8. English boys had greater knowledge of stereotypes than English girls but this was not true in Ireland and the United States. Generally, knowledge of male stereotype traits appeared to develop earlier while knowledge of the female traits increased more rapidly between ages 5 and 8. The similarity in sex-stereotype learning in the three countries was discussed and studies in progress in other countries of greater cultural diversity were noted.

Development of Sex-Trait Stereotypes Among Young Children in the United States, England, and Ireland

Sex-trait stereotypes may be defined as the constellations of psychological characteristics which are said to characterize men more, or less, frequently than women. Thus, males are often described as ambitious, rational, and independent, as well as, egotistical, coarse, and unemotional. Females are often described as affectionate, sensitive, and sociable, as well as frivolous, high-strung, and submissive. In spite of the egalitarian movements, recent studies in the United States have demonstrated that sex-trait stereotype beliefs continue to be prevalent among today's young adults (Bem, 1974; Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1972; Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1974; Williams & Bennett, 1975; Williams & Best, in press). Conceptually, sex-trait stereotypes may be viewed as providing the psychological justification for the more general sex-role stereotypes which consist of beliefs concerning the appropriateness of various activities for men and women, and which, in turn, support the different sex roles traditionally occupied by men and women.

While it is generally recognized that children in the early school years show some awareness of adult sex-trait stereotypes, there have been few systematic investigations of the development of such knowledge. One such study was conducted by Williams, Bennett and Best (1975) who developed a children's picture-story technique known as the Sex Stereotype Measure (SSM) based on the male and female stereotypes defined by college students (Williams & Bennett, 1975), and administered this procedure to kindergarten,

second- and fourth-grade children. The principal findings were: kindergarten children demonstrated an appreciable degree of knowledge of adult-defined sex-trait stereotypes; this knowledge increased to the second grade level but showed no further increase during the next two years; knowledge of sex stereotypes appeared to develop at a similar rate among boys and girls; and the learning of the male stereotype began at an earlier age than the learning of the female stereotype. The stimulus figures employed in this study consisted of full-length drawings of males and females, complete with facial features, clothing details, etc. The findings of the study suggested the possibility of picture-item confounds attributable to the subjects having responded to characteristics of the figure other than those which were indicative of gender. The authors noted that this problem might be obviated by the use of silhouette figures in which gender was represented only by hair length and style of dress, and which provided no other discriminable cues to the subjects.

In organizing the initial phase of a project concerned with the cross-national generality of sex stereotypes, it was reasoned that a comparison of stereotypes in England and Ireland with those in the United States would provide a base of comparison for subsequent studies in other countries. In one sense, the cultures of these three countries may be viewed as highly similar because of their historical association and common language. On the other hand, there are distinctive elements in each of the three cultures which might produce differences in the psychological characteristics attributed to men and women; for example, the lesser degree of industrialization in Ireland relative to the other two countries, or the fact that the modern

feminist movement with its emphasis on gender equality has been much more active in the United States than in England, and, as yet, has had little visibility in Ireland.

Studies were designed to compare sex-trait stereotypes in England and Ireland to those in the United States. At the young adult level, the Adjective Check List procedure of Williams and Bennett (1975) was employed with university students in England and Ireland. The results of this study, reported elsewhere (Williams, Giles, Edwards, Best, & Daws, in press), revealed a high degree of generality in the characteristics ascribed to men in the three countries, with a similar finding for the characteristics ascribed to women. There was, however, evidence that in Ireland the male and female stereotypes were not as sharply defined, or dramatically contrasted, as in the other two countries. Concurrent with the foregoing study of university students, a revised version of Williams, Bennett, and Best's (1975) sex-stereotype measure was employed to study the development of sex-stereotype knowledge among young children in the three countries. The present paper reports the findings of this study which examined the rate of learning of the sex stereotypes as well as the pattern of development of these belief systems.

Method

Subjects

The subjects from the United States were 196 Euro-American children from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, who were enrolled in local kindergartens, or in the third or sixth grades of local public schools. The

preschool group consisted of 30 male and 30 female children with a mean age of 59 months. The third grade group consisted of 44 male and 44 female children with a mean age of 106 months. The sixth grade group consisted of 24 male and 24 female children with a mean age of 143 months. The English subjects from Bristol, England were 40 children with a mean age of 67 months and 40 children with a mean age of 98 months. The Irish subjects from Dublin, Ireland, were 48 children with a mean age of 64 months and 48 children with a mean age of 96 months. In England and America, the boys and girls at each age level attended the same school, while the Irish children were from two "paired" schools, one for boys and one for girls. For convenience in exposition, children in the youngest age group in each country will be designated as 5-year-olds, those in the next age group as 8-year-olds, and the American children in the oldest age group as 11-year-olds.

Revision of the Sex Stereotype Measure (SSM)

The original version of the SSM (Williams, Bennett, & Best, 1975) contained a total of 24 brief stories, 12 representing male sex-trait stereotype characteristics and 12 representing female characteristics. In order to include certain stereotype characteristics defined by Williams and Bennett (1975) and Williams and Best (in press) which had not been included in the original SSM, the procedure was lengthened by the addition of four new male stereotype items and four new female stereotype items. The new items were devised by a panel of judges working in a manner similar to that described by Williams, Bennett and Best (1975, pages 636-637). In order to assess the success of the judges in composing

children's stories which reflected adult stereotype characteristics, the 32 items were then administered to a group of 110 male and female college students who were asked to judge each story as being either typically male or typically female. Thirty-one of the 32 stories were judged in the expected manner by more than 80% of these college students. The one exception was the item intended to represent the female characteristic "dreamy" which was associated with females only 56% of the time. This item was subsequently replaced by a story designed to represent the trait "excitable, high-strung" which college student judges subsequently associated with females 89% of the time. The responses obtained from the college student judges also were scored to determine for each judge the number of the 16 female items, and the number of the 16 male items, which were responded to in the expected manner. For all judges, the mean number of expected responses for the male and female items was 15.07 and 14.77, respectively, a statistically nonsignificant difference. The revised 32-item procedure, designated SSM II, is summarized in Table 1 in which are shown the concluding questions of the stories told to the children together with the adult adjective or adjective group which each story was intended to represent.

Insert Table 1 about here

The second major change in the revision of the SSM procedure was the use of silhouettes as visual stimuli with the head of each figure shown in profile and the gender of the figure indicated by the longer hair of the female figure and by the female figure wearing a dress while the male figure wore trousers. Each of the 32 stimulus pictures contained one

male and one female silhouette, each approximately 17.5 cm high, shown in black against a light blue background. In 16 of the pictures the male was on the left and the female was on the right, while this was reversed for the other 16. Within each group of 16 there were 4 silhouette facings: silhouettes facing away from each other, silhouettes facing toward each other, both silhouettes facing to the right, and both silhouettes facing to the left. For each facing, the silhouettes assumed one of four different postures: standing in one of two positions, sitting, and walking.

A group-administered procedure was devised for use with the sixth-grade children in the study. This was done by means of a test booklet in which the 32 SSM II stories were presented in the standard order shown in Table 1. To the right of each item were small male and female silhouettes which the subjects circled to indicate their choice of the male or female figure as most appropriate to the associated story.

Procedure

Five- and Eight-year-old Children: All Countries. The children were administered the SSM II procedure individually. In the United States and Ireland, one half of the children were tested by a male examiner, and one half by a female examiner; in England, all subjects were tested by a female examiner. Prior to the session with each child, the examiner randomized the SSM II silhouette figures across the items in the following manner. The 16 silhouettes with the male on the left were arranged in order using a table of random numbers. The same procedure was followed for the 16 pictures with the male on the right. The two orders were then

merged in LRLR fashion. Each subject was tested individually in a private room removed from his usual classroom. Following some initial conversation designed to put the subject at ease, the examiner gave the following instructions for the SSM II: "What I have here are some pictures I would like to show you and some stories that go with each one. I want you to help me by pointing to the person in each picture that the story is about. Here I'll show you what I mean." The examiner then displayed the first silhouette picture, and read the first story. Following the subject's choice the experimenter recorded the response on an answer sheet, turned to the next silhouette picture, and read the next story. The examiner insisted upon a definite response to each story; if the subject hesitated, the examiner told him to "try one" or to "point to one of them." Following completion of the procedure,[1] the examiner said, "Thank you for playing these games with me and I'd appreciate it if you wouldn't talk to the other children about the games we've played here, so the games will be new to them, too." The child was then returned to his classroom.

Eleven-year-old Children: United States. The procedure at this age level employed the paper and pencil version of the SSM II which was administered to the children in groups of ten to fifteen by a pair of male or a pair of female examiners. The following instructions from the first page of the booklet were read aloud to the students. "The booklet which you have in front of you contains stories which I want to read to you. I want to see if you believe that men behave in one way and women behave in another, different way. . . . Follow along as I read you these stories . . . . If the story tells about something you think a man would

be more likely to do, draw a circle around the picture of the man . . . . If the story tells about something you think a woman would be more likely to do, draw a circle around the picture of the woman." After two practice items to familiarize the subjects with the task, the examiner read aloud each of the 32 SSM II items with the students, allowing sufficient time for the students to indicate their response to each item.

Results

The performance of each subject on SSM II was scored in the following manner. A female stereotype score was obtained by counting one point for each of the 16 female items to which the subject responded by the selection of a female figure. A male stereotype score was obtained in like manner by counting one point for selection of a male figure in response to each of the 16 male items. Each of these stereotype subscores had a range of 0-16 with high scores indicating a high degree of stereotype knowledge, low scores indicating a reversal of conventional stereotypes, and scores around 8 indicating no consistent association of the stereotype items with a particular sex. The male and female stereotype subscores were also combined to create a total stereotype score with a possible score range of 0-32 and a chance midpoint of 16.

Developmental Study: United States

The general design of this study was such that, at each age level, there were equal numbers of male and female subjects with half of each sex of subject group being tested by male examiners and the other half by female examiners. This design is reflected in Table 2 which shows the

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Insert Table 2 about here

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mean male and female stereotype subscores obtained by the children in each sex of subject/sex of examiner group, at each of the three age levels. A four-dimensional analysis of variance of these data was conducted with the between-subjects variables of age, sex of subject, and sex of examiner, and the within-subject variable of stereotype subscore. The results of this analysis revealed a significant main effect of age of subject, F (2, 184) = 81.73, $p < .001$, and a significant main effect of stereotype subscore, F (1, 184) = 18.86 $p < .001$. The main effects of sex of subject and sex of examiner were not significant, nor were any of the interactions of the four variables studied. The mean scores corresponding to the two significant main effects are displayed at the right-hand side of Table 2 where it can be seen that, in all subject groups, the mean male stereotype subscore was higher than the mean female stereotype subscore, and that the mean total stereotype scores increased regularly with age.

Reference to the binomial distribution indicated that SSM II total scores of 23 and up would occur by chance about one percent of the time in a group of children who had no knowledge of sex stereotypes and were responding to the 32 items at random. Using this as a criterion, it was found that 14 of the 60 5-year-olds, 60 of the 88 8-year-olds, and 47 of the 48 11-year-old children obtained individual SSM II total scores of 23 and higher and, thus, demonstrated a significant knowledge of conventional sex stereotypes.

Cross-National Comparison: 5- and 8-year-olds

In order to conduct an analysis of variance comparing the SSM II scores of the 5- and 8-year-olds in England and Ireland to the comparable groups in the United States, it was necessary to have equal numbers of children in each age group in each country. This was accomplished by the random elimination of 14 male and 14 female subjects from the 88 children in the American 8-year-old group.[2] This resulted in 60 children in each of the American age groups which maintained proportionality to the 40 children in each English group and the 48 children in each Irish group. Prior to further analysis, the scores for the Irish samples were examined to determine whether there was evidence of sex of examiner effects. Consistent with the findings from the main analysis of the American data reported above, such evidence was not found and the Irish and American data were each pooled across sex of examiner.

The mean male, female, and total stereotype subscores for the boys and girls at each age level in the three countries are displayed in Table 3 where it can be seen that there was some degree of knowledge of sex stereo-

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Insert Table 3 about here

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types in all groups of subjects. The data summarized in Table 3 were subjected to a four-dimensional analysis of variance, with the between-subjects factors of sex of subject, country and age, and the within-subjects factor of male and female stereotype subscores. The results of this analysis revealed that there were significant main effects of age, F (1, 284) = 87.41, $p < .001$, country, F (2, 284) = 10.88, $p < .01$, and stereotype subscore,

F (1, 286) = 37.88, $p < .001$, and that there were, in addition, four significant double interactions: country x age, F (2, 284) = 5.58, $p < .01$; country x sex of subject, F (2, 284) = 3.87, $p < .05$; sex of subject x stereotype subscore, F (1, 286) = 15.76, $p < .01$; and age x stereotype subscore, F (1, 286) = 4.85, $p < .05$.

The main effect of stereotype was due to the mean male stereotype subscore of 11.09 being higher than the mean female subscore of 10.17, but the interaction of stereotype subscore and sex of subject indicated that this effect was attributable primarily to difference in the scores of the boy subjects who obtained a mean male score of 11.49 and a mean female score of 9.98, while the comparable mean scores for the girl subjects were 10.69 and 10.36.[3] The interaction between age and stereotype subscore seemed due to the fact that the difference between mean male and female subscores at the 5-year (10.35 vs. 9.10) level was significant ($p < .01$) and the difference at the 8-year level (11.83 vs. 11.24) was not. The interaction between country and sex of subject was attributable to the fact that the English boys obtained higher total stereotype scores ($\bar{X}$ = 22.90) than the English girls ($\bar{X}$ = 20.73) while there was little difference in the mean total scores of boys and girls in the United States (21.73 vs. 22.15) or in Ireland (19.96 vs. 19.96).

The main effects of age and country, and the interaction of these variables can be observed in Figure 1. Also shown, for reference purposes,

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Insert Figure 1 about here

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are two additional scores from the American study: the mean SSM II score for the 11-year-old American children; and the mean number of correct responses obtained when the university students were asked to classify each SSM II item as being more characteristic of men or of women. The two main effects in the present analysis are seen in the fact that the 8-year-old children generally obtained higher scores than did 5-year-old children, and that the Irish children generally obtained somewhat lower scores than did the children in the two other countries. The country-by-age interaction seemed primarily attributable to the shift in relative position of the English children between the younger and older age levels. At age 5, the English children obtained the highest mean score, while at age 8 the American children obtained the highest mean score; at both age levels the Irish children knew less than the other two groups. Another way to describe this effect is to note that the rate of stereotype learning between ages 5 and 8 appeared faster for the American children than for the other two groups.[4]

Item Analyses

Analyses were conducted to determine whether the children's knowledge of sex-trait stereotypes was evenly distributed across all test items or whether knowledge of certain traits developed earlier than knowledge of other traits. This was accomplished by computing the percent of stereotyped responses made to each item by the boys and girls at each age level in each country. These data were first analyzed to determine the degree of agreement between the boy and girl subjects as to the percent of stereotype responses across the various items. This was summarized by computing

product-moment correlation coefficients at each age level in each country, between the percent of boys and percent of girls giving stereotype responses across all 32 of the SSM II items. In the United States, the resulting coefficients were: 5-year-olds, r = .40; 8-year-olds, r = .76; and 11-year-olds, r = .75. In England, the coefficients were: 5-year-olds, r = .69; and 8-year-olds, r = .88. In Ireland, the coefficients were: 5-year-olds, r = .45; and 8-year-olds, r = .77. In view of this evidence of agreement, the item percents for the boys and girls, at each age level in each country, were merged. These percents are shown in Table 4 where the

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Insert Table 4 about here

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16 female items are displayed in the upper half of the table and the 16 male items in the lower. In general, the items are listed in descending order of the percent of stereotype responses given by the children in the 11-year-old American group.

In Table 4, all percents of 67 or higher are shown in italics. This designates those items on which at least two-thirds of the children in a particular group had given the stereotyped response and had, thus, met the arbitrary criterion for saying that there was an appreciable degree of stereotype awareness in the group. Employing this criterion and examining the responses of the American children, one observes that: the 5-year-olds reached criterion on 4 of the 16 female items and 7 of the 16 male items; the 8-year-olds reached criterion on 12 of the female items and 11 of the male items; and the 11-year-olds reached criterion on 14 of the female items and 14 of the male items. In the latter group, the

two female items which did not reach criterion were those representing "fussy/nagging," and "flirtatious/charming"; while the two male items which did not reach criterion were "severe/stern," and "logical/rational.".

An inspection of the Table 4 item percents for the 5- and 8-year-old English and Irish children reveals a pattern of similarity to the item percents of the comparably-aged American groups. This was summarized by computing product moment correlation coefficients at each age level between the item percents for each pair of countries across all 32 items. At the 5-year level, the following coefficients were obtained: American vs. English, .66; American vs. Irish, .64; and English vs. Irish, .72. At the 8-year level, the coefficients were: American vs. English, .93; American vs. Irish, .87; and English vs. Irish, .89. These coefficients reflected substantial agreement across countries in the items to which large and small percents of stereotype responses were made, with greater consistency found at the 8-year-old level than at the 5-year-old level.

Discussion

The results of the study of American children indicated that the development of sex-trait stereotype knowledge is a gradual process which can be viewed as a linear function of chronological age between the ages of 5 and 11 years. At age 5, American children are aware of only a few of the more salient stereotype characteristics, while by age 11, they know all but a few of the more subtle characteristics. Since preschool children have been shown to have a substantial knowledge of sex roles (Flerx, Fidler, & Rogers, 1976; Kohlberg, 1966; Thompson, 1975), it appears that the typical American child learns a great deal about the differential

roles of men and women prior to learning most of the differential traits used by adults to justify the conventional role assignments.

Consistent with the findings of our earlier study (Williams, Bennett, & Best, 1975), there was evidence that the American children at all age levels knew more of the conventional male stereotype than the conventional female stereotype. While there are plausible reasons as to why the male stereotype may be learned earlier and/or better than the female stereotype (Williams, Bennett, & Best, 1975), the clarification of the determinants of this effect must await the outcome of future research.

A negative finding of methodological importance was the absence of any effects of sex of examiner. Contrary to the findings of our earlier study (Williams, Bennett, & Best, 1975), there was no indication that the sex of the persons conducting the interview with the children affected their sex-stereotype responses.

The item analysis of the SSM II data for the American children indicated that there were differences in the age at which the children became aware of various stereotype traits. At age 5, the children were aware that women are supposed to be gentle and affectionate and that men are supposed to be strong, aggressive, and dominant. By age 8, the children had learned, in addition, that females are considered weak, emotional, appreciative, excitable, gentle, soft-hearted, sophisticated, meek, and submissive; and had learned that males are considered disorderly, cruel, coarse, adventurous, independent, ambitious, loud, and boastful. By age 11, the children had learned, in addition, that females are expected to be talkative, rattle-brained, and complaining; while males are expected to be confident, steady,

and jolly. On the other hand, the analyses indicated that the learning of the stereotypes is not yet complete at age 11 since the children did not know that women are said to be flirtatious, and men are said to be logical. Apparently, the learning of certain aspects of the male and female stereotypes continues into the adolescent years.

The results of the cross-national study indicated some interesting differences in a context of general similarity. The findings suggested that Irish children learn sex stereotypes at a somewhat slower rate than do children of comparable age in England and the United States, although the nature of the stereotypes being learned is highly similar in all three countries. There are several factors which may contribute to the lower scores of the Irish children observed at each age level. First, there is the fact that the Irish children in this study, and most other urban children in Ireland, attend sex-segregated schools which may serve to retard the learning of the "differences" between males and females. A second consideration is our impression that the role of the mother in Ireland is a particularly strong one which may lead to her being seen more as a firm and controlling influence than a gentle and emotional person, and, hence, delay the learning of the conventional sex stereotype. Finally, as noted earlier, our studies with university students (Williams, Giles, Edwards, Best, & Daws, in press) have suggested that the male and female stereotypes may not be as sharply differentiated in Ireland as in the two other countries, and, hence, may require a longer period of exposure for learning.

An additional cross-national difference was the evidence that at the 5-year-old level the English children had the greatest degree of sex-stereotype knowledge, but that during the next three years the rate of learning was slower for English children with the result that by age 8, American children appeared to exceed the English children in stereotype knowledge. Another difference was seen in the fact that English boys appear to have greater knowledge of sex stereotypes than English girls, but no such sex differences were found in either of the other countries. These differences suggest that while the nature of the stereotype being learned is much the same in all three countries, there may be some important variations in socialization practices which lead the English children, particularly the boys, to develop an early knowledge of sex stereotypes.

The similarities in children's knowledge of sex stereotypes across the three countries were more impressive than were the differences. In all countries there was a clear progression in sex-stereotype learning from age 5 to age 8. There was also evidence of a general sex difference with young boys showing a greater awareness of the male than the female stereotype, while the young girls appeared to have nearly equal knowledge of both. This may be related to the fact that, in general, young boys experience socialization pressures toward "sex-appropriate" behaviors at an earlier age than do young girls. Another similarity across countries was in the tendency for knowledge of the female stereotype to increase more rapidly between ages 5 and 8 than did the male stereotype. In effect, it appears that the learning of the male stereotype begins earlier than the learning of the female stereotype, perhaps due to its containing more behaviorally

oriented components (Williams, Bennett, & Best, 1975), but there is an acceleration in the learning of the female stereotype during the early school years.

The findings of this study indicate that the acquisition of knowledge of sex-trait stereotypes is a general developmental process beginning prior to age 5 and extending well beyond age 11. While the determinants of this learning are not yet well understood, recent studies in the U.S. at the preschool level suggest that children's books (Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada, & Ross, 1972) and television programs (Frueh & McGhee, 1975; Sternglanz & Serbin, 1974) may provide potent models and sources of reinforcement for stereotyped views. While not yet well documented, it seems likely that similar influences are at work in England and Ireland (Lobban, 1975).

The similarity of sex-trait stereotypes in the United States, England, and Ireland provides a solid base of comparison for subsequent studies in countries of greater historical and linguistic diversity. The Adjective Check List procedure which we use for studies of young adults is currently available in the French, German, Norwegian, Spanish, and Italian languages. The SSM II method for children has been translated into French, German, Dutch, Norwegian, Spanish, and Japanese, and is currently being translated into Hebrew and Chinese. As sex-stereotype findings are obtained in other countries, it will be interesting to observe whether cultural relativism is the rule or whether, as in the present study, the general picture is one of pan-cultural similarity in the psychological characteristics attributed to men and to women.

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Footnotes

[1]In all subject groups, except those in England, the SSM II was followed by another research procedure not reported here.

[2]All other analyses in this paper involving 8-year-old American children use all 88 subjects.

[3]While this effect was observable in the mean differences at the 5- and 8-year levels in the earlier analysis of the American data (see Table 1), it was not evident at the 11-year level and, overall, was not statistically significant, F (1, 184) = 2.14.

[4]The fact that the age spread between the two American groups was somewhat greater than that in the other two countries would tend to contribute to this interaction effect. The interaction was recomputed using estimates of the scores which would have been obtained by the American children had their mean age been equal to the mean ages of the children in the two other countries. The interaction remained evident and was still statistically significant ($p < .01$).

Table 1

Male (M) and Female (F) Stereotype Adjective(s) and Concluding Questions from Children's Stories

Item	Stereotype	Adult Adjective(s)	Concluding Question
1	F	emotional	. . . (cry's a lot), is emotional?
2	M	aggressive, assertive, tough, forceful	. . . gets into fights
3	M	adventurous, daring, courageous	. . . (went on a safari), is adventurous?
4	F	appreciative	. . . always says "thank you"?
5	F	weak	. . . is the weak person?
6	M	independent	. . . gets along by themself?
7	M	disorderly	. . . is the messy person?
8	F	talkative	. . . talks a lot?
9	F	rattlebrained, fickle	. . . is always changing their mind?
10	M	ambitious, enterprising	. . . owns a big store?
11	M	jolly	. . . (laughs a lot), is the jolly person?
12	F	gentle	. . . (holds puppies carefully), is the gentle person?
13	F	frivolous	. . . buys silly things?
14	M	cruel	. . . (hurts other people), is the cruel person?
15	M	steady, stable, unemotional, unexcitable	. . . (doesn't get excited) is the steady person?

Table 1 (Continued)

Item	Stereotype	Adult Adjective(s)	Concluding Question
16	F	fussy, nagging	. . . is always fussing?
17	F	meek, mild	. . . is the shy person?
18	M	boastful	. . . brags about the things they have done?
19	M	coarse	. . . says bad words?
20	F	whiny, complaining	. . . the complaining person?
21	F	flirtatious, charming, attractive	. . . flirts a lot?
22	M	severe, stern	. . . (frowns when things done wrong), is the severe person?
23	M	loud	. . . talks loudly?
24	F	excitable, high-strung	. . . gets excited easily?
25	F	affectionate	. . . likes to hug and kiss a lot?
26	M	dominant, autocratic	. . . makes most of the rules?
27	M	confident, self-confident	. . . is sure of themself?
28	F	soft-hearted, sentimental, sensitive	. . . (feel sorry when kitten gets hurt), is soft-hearted
[illegible]	F	submissive, dependent	. . . depends on someone else to make the rules?
30	M	logical, rational, realistic	. . . solves their problems carefully?

Table 1 (Continued)

Item	Stereotype	Adult Adjective(s)	Concluding Question
31	M	strong, robust	. . . is the strong person?
32	F	sophisticated, affected, prudish	. . . does everything just right?

Table 2

Mean Male (M), Female (F), and Total SSM II Scores for Five-, Eight-, and Eleven-Year-Old Boys and Girls Tested by Male and Female Examiners

Five-Year-Olds (N = 60)

	Boys			Girls			All Subjects		
	M Score	F Score	Total Score	M Score	F Score	Total Score	M Score	F Score	Total Score
Male	10.13	8.53	18.66	10.27	9.80	20.07	10.20	9.17	19.37
Female Exam.	10.40	8.07	18.47	10.47	9.93	20.40	10.44	9.00	19.44
All Exam.	10.27	8.30	18.57	10.37	9.87	20.24	10.32	9.09	19.40

Eight-Year-Olds (N = 88)

	Boys			Girls			All Subjects		
	M Score	F Score	Total Score	M Score	F Score	Total Score	M Score	F Score	Total Score
Male Exam	12.55	12.18	24.73	12.45	12.05	24.50	12.50	12.12	24.62
Female Exam.	12.50	11.41	23.91	11.77	11.27	23.04	12.14	11.34	23.48
All Exam.	12.53	11.80	24.33	12.11	11.66	23.77	12.32	11.73	24.04

Eleven-Year-Olds (N = 48)

	Boys			Girls			All Subjects		
	M Score	F Score	Total Score	M Score	F Score	Total Score	M Score	F Score	Total Score
Male Exam.	14.08	13.83	27.91	13.58	13.75	27.33	13.83	13.79	27.63
Female Exam.	13.17	13.08	26.25	14.17	12.83	27.00	13.67	12.96	26.63
All Exam.	13.67	13.45	27.08	13.88	13.29	27.17	13.75	13.38	27.12

Table 3

Cross-National Comparisons: Means of Male (M) and Female (F) and Total Sex-Trait Stereotype Scores Among 5- and 8-Year Old Children

	5-Year-Olds				8-Year-Olds			
	(N)	M	F	Total	(N)	M	F	Total
England								
Boys	(20)	11.80	9.85	21.65	(20)	12.40	11.75	24.15
Girls	(20)	9.80	10.20	20.00	(20)	10.65	10.80	21.45
Total	(40)	10.80	10.03	20.83	(40)	11.53	11.28	22.81
Ireland								
Boys	(24)	10.25	8.00	18.25	(24)	11.50	10.17	21.67
Girls	(24)	9.79	8.71	18.50	(24)	10.96	10.46	21.42
Total	(48)	10.02	8.36	18.38	(48)	11.23	10.32	21.55
United States								
Boys	(30)	10.27	8.30	18.57	(30)	12.90	12.00	24.90
Girls	(30)	10.37	9.87	20.24	(30)	12.13	11.93	24.06
Total	(60)	10.32	9.09	19.41	(60)	12.52	11.97	24.49

Table 4

Percent of Stereotyped Responses to SSM II Items by 5- and 8-Year-Old Children in England and Ireland, and 5-, 8-, and 11-Year-Old Children in the United States

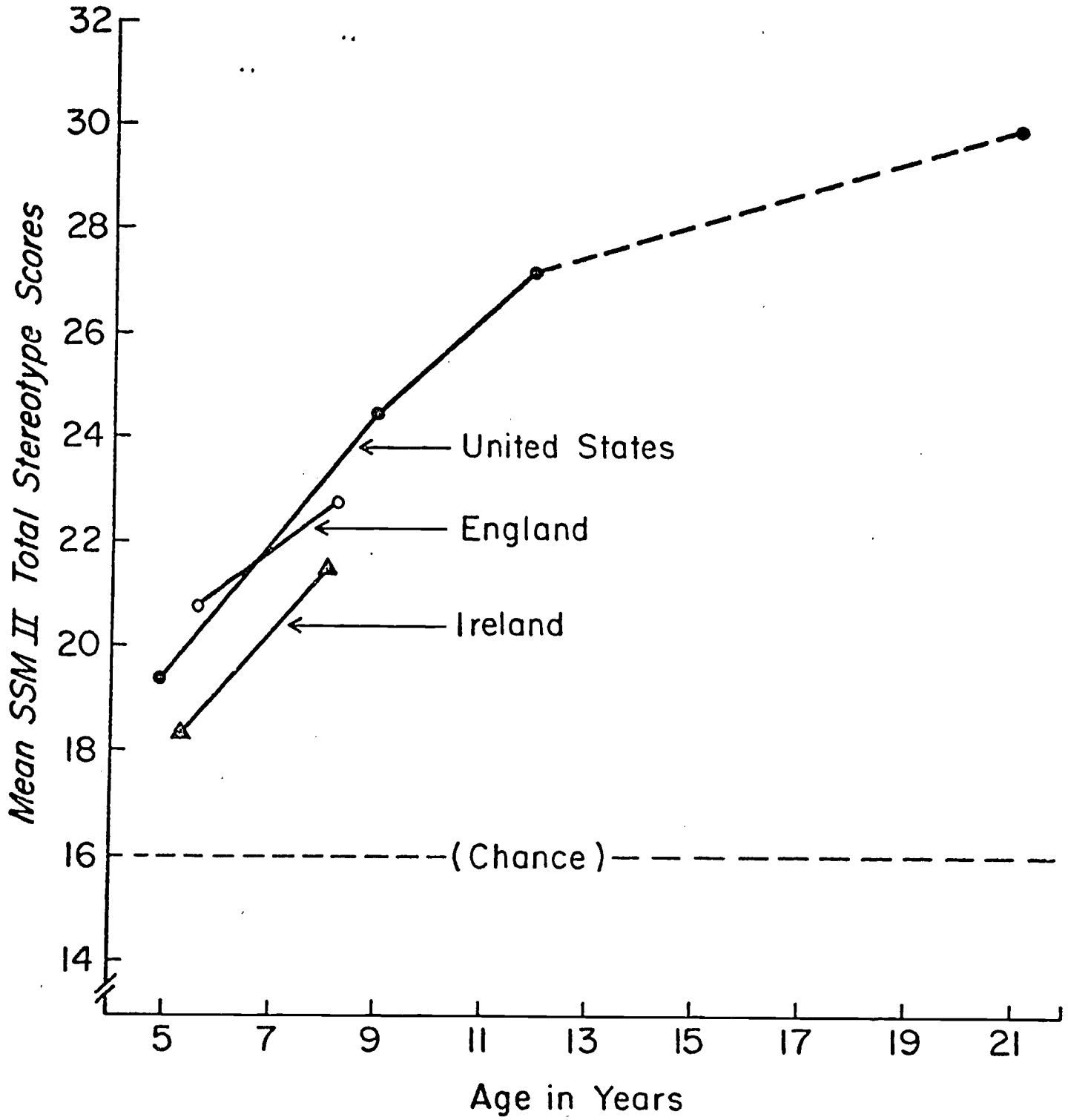
Item #	Stereotype Trait(s) (Adult Definition)	United States			England		Ireland	
Female Items		5	8	11	5	8	5	8
5	weak	60	98	100	79	95	50	71
1	emotional	68	84	100	92	95	65	75
4	appreciative	62	92	98	82	93	50	85
24	excitable, high-strung	57	80	98	55	70	56	73
12	gentle	77	86	96	68	95	48	75
28	soft-hearted, sentimental, etc.	68	93	96	87	90	69	88
32	sophisticated, affected, etc.	63	88	96	68	93	69	88
8	talkative	53	44	85	55	43	40	52
9	rattlebrained, fickle	47	67	85	45	58	35	38
17	meek, mild	60	73	83	82	85	63	81
29	submissive, dependent	43	73	83	50	73	52	52
20	whiny, complaining	53	71	79	37	60	48	52
13	frivolous	28	35	69	34	10	44	23
25	affectionate	70	78	67	71	83	56	79
16	fussy, nagging	53	55	63	32	55	48	48
21	flirtatious, charming, etc.	45	56	40	66	50	56	65

Table 4 (Continued)

Item #	Stereotype Trait(s) (Adult Definition	United States			England		Ireland	
Male Items		5	8	11	5	8	5	8
31	strong, robust	95	99	100	89	98	81	96
2	aggressive, assertive, etc.	78	94	98	92	100	77	88
7	disorderly	68	92	98	76	90	58	75
14	cruel	72	92	96	89	98	75	83
19	coarse	68	86	96	74	90	77	81
3	adventurous, daring, etc.	57	85	92	68	78	48	67
6	independent	65	82	90	63	85	69	85
10	ambitious, enterprising	68	83	90	60	65	65	73
23	loud	60	89	90	71	83	71	79
26	dominant, autocratic	75	80	88	71	85	56	77
27	confident, self-confident	53	60	88	45	35	54	56
15	steady, stable, etc.	47	46	85	24	23	40	31
11	jolly	52	58	81	55	35	42	50
18	boastful	57	76	77	84	90	71	75
22	severe, stern	57	66	56	84	65	67	69
30	logical, rational, etc.	60	50	52	37	38	50	38

Figure Caption

Figure 1. Mean total sex-stereotype scores of 5- and 8-year-old children in England, Ireland, and the United States, with additional reference data from studies in the United States.


Mean SSM II Total Stereotype Scores
32
30
28
26
24
22
20
18
16
14
United States
England
Ireland
(Chance)
5
7
9
11
13
15
17
19
21
Age in Years