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Dramatic Play at the Preschool Level

An Independent Study

Presented to the Faculty of the Beirut College for Women
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Bachelor of Arts

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The writer was born in Gazieh, Lebanon. She received her primary and secondary education at the National Evangelical School in Sidon (formerly, Sidon Girls' School) from where she graduated in 1958. In the Fall of 1958 she entered the Beirut College for Women. At the present time the writer is a senior majoring in Social Studies — Psychology.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this investigation is to study the psychology^h of play at the Preschool level.

The Second Chapter deals with the review of literature with respect to play. Play, being universal and dominant in the child's life, led several authorities to theorize on the interpretations of play.

There is still difficulty in interpreting the meaning of children's play, because one can not speak of the child's play in general. Theories and research in terms of types and motivation of play^{were developed.} The writer limited herself to one phase of play namely dramatic play on which her research was based.

Play relieves tension, and through it a child will be able to express underlying emotional conflicts in his most rational language. In free dramatic play, children work out their inner conflicts in an external field by projecting them into the outer world. The important thing is to give the children the spaces, the freedom, and the materials for free play and leave them to it. It is for this reason that the nursery school can do such valuable work for the child's life. Thus he learns early in his life to give

and take, cooperate and to interact socially with other children.

In the present research, the writer investigated on the types of social participation on dramatic play as it took place in the Nursery School of The Beirut College for Women.

In the Third Chapter, the writer discusses the procedure for her research. The subjects were 15 in number, eight boys and seven girls who were of ages three and four. Children were not selected out of the child population. The subjects taken were those who appeared mostly in the doll-corner. Children were studied by means of observation. These observations were categorized under patterns of social participation. Other factors in their relationship to play were also determined.

The Fourth Chapter discusses the findings of the study. The writer found individual differences of children who engaged in each type of activity. These differences are discussed in terms of sex, age, nationality, occupation of the father and the mother, number of siblings, number of play equipment provided by parents and the emotional problems of children.

The Fifth Chapter which gives the conclusions also discusses and relates the findings to each other and to theory. Suggestions for further research are also included.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter deals with theories and research conducted with respect to play; it also relates play to other factors such as age, sex and education.

Theories

There are several theories that attempt to explain play, each has different points of view.

The Theory of Superfluous Energy.

This is a very well known theory among the theories of play. It is the oldest and simplest. "According to this theory, play is 'blowing off steam.'¹ Children play because they are so full of energy that they can't stay still. Schiller, a German poet supported it by defining play as "The aimless expenditure of exuberant energy." An illustration of this is the lion who roars when he is well fed.

Some said that this theory was known by the Stoics of ancient Greece.

¹William P. Bowen and Elmer D. Mitchell, The Theory Of Organized Play, (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1924), p. 182.

Some others take Schiller and Spenser as the originators of this theory. But in fact it was known before them, it was proved to be known by the Stoics. Nevertheless Schiller was the first to put it into ^{its} perfect form.

This theory is plausible and generally accepted by the uneducated man who can grasp it very easily. An intense study of this theory shows that it is not a very sound one, since children play because they like to, not necessarily because they have a superfluous energy. In the most part children like to play incessantly, changing from one activity to another. Moreover, if one adopts this theory it will follow that all kinds of play are aimless and the play of different species would be very much alike since their source is the same.

Recreation Theory.

It defines play as "an occupation engaged in for recreation rather than for business or from necessity."² This idea was an old one elaborated by Lord Kames, an English Nobleman and philosopher, who said that we play to "refresh ourselves."

Guts Muths supported that "games are an exercise and recreation of body and mind." One of Muth's supporters, Professor Lazarus, urged people to "Flee from empty idleness to active recreation in play."³ That is when we are tired of mental or physical labour and still do not wish to sleep or rest, we gladly welcome the active recreation afforded by play.

Apparently this theory seems to be contradictory to the Spencerian

² Bowen, pp. 182-184.

³ Bowen, p. 184.

superfluous theory, but actually it is supplementary. For when one plays a game he is relieving his motor impulses and at the same time relaxing his mental powers.

The Instinct Theory.

The child breathes, cries and does many other things instinctively. He plays as a result of having acquired the ability to do many things. He also tries instinctively to perform these abilities and is satisfied by doing so.

The early Churchmen of the Middle Ages viewed play as an example of the "original sin" of mankind. Play is impelled by Satan. Rousseau viewed instinct and favored it as being a gift of nature to strengthen the body and develop the mind. Froebel, who was the originator of kindergarten, viewed play as developing the spiritual nature of the child. He overemphasized imitation which is a dominant instinct in children.

Herbert Spencer stated his view of the origin of play as follows: "For girls as well as for boys, the sportive activities to which the instincts impel are essential to bodily welfare. Whoever forbids them, forbids the divinely appointed means to physical development."

A few years before, in his "Principles of Psychology", Spencer said that, in the play of boys, the motive is in achieving victory which gives them satisfaction. Moreover, Spencer emphasized "The struggle for existence" of human beings which is due to the fact that man has more force than needed. This is a characteristic of the nervous system, as the cells are torn out they are renewed and rebuilt and are accompanied by an inherited readiness to discharge.

It is clear here that Spencer maintained the instinct theory. Some other authors account for him the Superfluous energy theory. The reason may be that Groos misconceived Spencer when he used some of his German works. So others came and repeated Groos's view without checking the writings of Spencer.

Moreover, Spencer was misconceived at a point when he says: That imitation is the main source of play. What Spencer means to say is that "forms of play tend to take the forms of the adult activities of the same species." He speaks of kittens pretending the catching of mice, and the play of girls with dolls, similar to the work of women, but he never indicates or says that this is a conscious imitation but it is rather an instinctive act.

Groos's contribution was also in support of the instinctive theory. He thought that "animals cannot be said to play because they are young and frolicsome, but rather they have a period of youth in order to play." Play has a great role on the adult personality; it helps creating a certain type of person. Man develops from generation to generation, and he perfects his play which is likely to develop a higher quotient of intelligence. But Groos's theory overemphasises the role of play. Moreover it forgets about many harmful plays such as gambling and use of drugs.

Some writers seem to forget about another interpretation that Groos gives to play: it is a kind of "Catharsis"⁴ i.e. a compensation reaction by which the child exteriorizes some emotions that would create many mental and physiological disturbances if not released.

⁴ Bowen, pp. 186-190.

The Inheritance Theory.

It looks upon play as being the inheritance of many abilities and other instinctive desires and pleasures well coordinated. Doctor G. Stanley Hall, an eminent child psychologist, is one of the greatest supporters of this theory. According to him, "the view of Gress that play is practice for future adult activities is very partial, superficial and perverse. It ignores the past where lies the key to all play activities." All our plays are nothing but a more or less modified copy of our ancestors. One could say they are a rehearsal of them.

The inheritance theory does not have to contradict the instinct theory. If one does not look at instinct as merely being prophetic we could trace instinct itself to inheritance. Dr. Hall's statement "Play never practices any thing racially new" seems to be a very extreme one. By the very fact it seems to neglect some new elements which could be added to play by eminent people who are highly intelligent, who excell, and who can invent. Apart from this point, this theory is quite a sound one to explain human abilities such as climbing, hiding, chasing . . . etc.⁵

Psycheanalytic Theory.

Freud and his followers point out that at the third and fourth years of life the child reaches the third stage of development known as the phallic stage. He becomes interested in sexual things and in the opposite sex in his relation to others. His interest in the genitals becomes magnified in masturbation.⁶

⁵ Bowen, pp. 190-192.

⁶ Paul Henry Mussen and John Janway Conger, Child Development and Personality (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 233.

According to Freud, a very important development takes place which is the development of the Oedipus Complex. Mostly, it occurs at the ages Four and Five. "The boy tries to take over his father's place; he considers his father a competitor and develops ambivalent feelings toward him." For he loves his mother and wants to seduce her. The child masturbates, here the mother forbids him to do so, and he interprets it as a threat to take away his penis. Castration fears then develop.

"In some cases the love of the father is stronger and the little boy represses his phallic strivings toward his mother. Instead he develops a passive, pregenital sexual desire for his father. This negative Oedipus Complex may lead to homosexuality." With the girls the case is different. As soon as they realize the sexual difference, she develops a penis envy and wishes to have a penis and develops a love for her father, which is called "Electra Complex". She begins by making vain attempts to do the same as boys and later, with greater success, makes effort to compensate herself for the defect — efforts which may lead in the end to a normal feminine attitude.⁷ The core of her fantasies could be phrased as: "I can do what any grown-up can ; I am big." Oedipal play is either solitary (playing with doll or toy soldier) or social (several children play together).⁸ But the problems he tries to solve are his very own.

"Through his play the child prepares for adult roles and functions, acquires skills which in his society will be useful to the future adult."

⁷ Benjamin B. Wolman, Contemporary Theories and Systems in Psychology (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. 235.

⁸ Lili Peller, "Libidinal Development As Reflected In Plays," Journal of Psychoanalytic Psychology, III (Spring 1955), pp. 5-6.

One can tentatively say that all play in which the child fails to perform superficially but he constructs and creates something is directed by the striving of the Oedipal situations.⁹

"All play brings wish fulfillment, pleasure, elation, a feeling of euphoria, well-being. Play, however, is not a direct manipulation of the pleasure principle. It is an attempt to compensate for anxieties and deficiencies to obtain pleasure at a minimum risk of danger for irreversible consequences. Play is a step toward sublimation. The direct discharge of sexual or destructive drives is not play, but sexual and/or destructive elements enter into all play."

Play is considered play when the child is able to stop when he wants. Moreover, unconscious impulses can be acted out in play without reaching awareness. Therefore such conflicts and anxiety aroused by instinctual drives that are incompatible with reality and even with one another, may be reduced by play.¹⁰

One may summarize these theories in terms of the following definitions:-

1. "Schiller: The aimless expenditure of exuberant energy.
2. Spencer: Superfluous actions taking place instinctively in the absence of real actions. -- Activity performed for the immediate gratification derived, without regard to ulterior benefits.
3. Guts Muths: The natural exercise and recreation of body and mind.
4. Froebel: The natural unfolding of the germinal leaves of childhood.
5. Groes: Instinctive practice, without serious intent, of activities that

⁹ Lili Peller, "Libidinal Phases, Ego Development, And Play," Psycheanalytic Study Of The Child, IX (1954), pp. 189-190.

¹⁰ Peller, "Libidinal Phases", pp. 179-180.

will later be essential to life.

6. Hall: The motor habits and spirit of the past persisting in the present".¹¹
7. Freud: Symbolic expression of wishes and of actions which are prohibited to the child in reality. "Instincts are the ultimate cause of all activity."¹²

One can recognize from these definitions the difference in view points. The oldest ones are the ones that give the traditional definitions. Muths and Froebel, don't give a real definition, but they emphasize the importance of play in education.

Spencer and Groes "see every thing from the viewpoint of evolution, with the main emphasis on the struggle for existence. Hall and others, look upon play as a rehearsal of many successive stages of racial history."

In spite of the differences in points of view, there are still certain points that are agreed upon:-

1. Play is activity.
2. Play is not limited to any particular form of activity, it may be neuromuscular, sensory, mental or a combination of all three.
3. The value of play is due to its power to interest the player, absorb his attention and arouse him to enthusiastic and persistent activity. Education must be active rather than passive; "it is what the child does for himself and not what some one does for him that educates him".
4. Whether all activity is play or not is debatable. For what is play for

¹¹ Bowen, p. 195.

¹² Sigmund Freud, Dictionary of Psychoanalysis, ed. Mander Fader and Frank Gayner (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), p. 98.

him on one day, may not be on the second, depending on his mental attitude toward that particular play; this attitude may change with conditions and situations.

5. Play spirit may be considered as an attitude of mind, but psychologists did not yet agree on its nature. It is more agreed upon that the main characteristic of play is satisfaction in play itself. This agrees with Spencer.¹³

One phase of Play is dramatic Play. Lili Peller and Katherine Read gave several factors that determine the choice of roles taken by children.

Dramatic Play will be discussed in terms of the following:-

- a) Meaning b) Idiomatic Nature c) Value

The Meaning Of Dramatic Play

"Through play children reveal themselves and their concepts of the world to us,"¹⁴ Therefore dramatic play helps one to have insight into the child's inner self and relieves his anxiety and tension as well. Dramatic play involves imagination. "It is a rehearsal of the baby's own action." The child may be performing real work in his dramatic play which they will perform later on.¹⁵ Gross says: "Imitation is a play when it is enjoyed for its own sake."¹⁶ Children enjoy accomplishing work for its own sake and it means a lot to them. Freud pointed out in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle",

¹³ Bowen, pp. 195-196.

¹⁴ Katherine H. Read, The Nursery School (Philadelphia: W.B. Sanders Company, 1950), pp. 240-241.

¹⁵ Bertrand Russel, On Education (London: Urwin Books, 1960), p. 289.

¹⁶ Karl Gross, The Play of Man (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1901), p. 289.

that it is necessary to assume a special instinct to imitate, for he believed that there is no imitation without emotional motivation.¹⁷ Thus the child chooses roles that appeal most to him and have certain meaning.

Dramatic play creates the atmosphere for grouping. In an observational study, it was found out that dramatic play was the most social activity.¹⁸ Family roles are often acted by children especially the relationship of mother and children and father and mother are mostly enacted. Anna Freud in her book "Infants Without Families" points out that children while imitating, use the same expressions as their mother used. They imitate the routine activities and use the same means for arranging them.¹⁹ Thus the child chooses roles that appeal most to him and have certain meaning; these choices are usually based on certain factors:-

1. Choice Based on Love and Admiration.

The child tries to imitate a person whom he loves and admires and whom he wishes to be like. Bertrand Russel says in his book, "On Education": "The main instinctive urge of childhood ... is the desire to become adult, or, perhaps more correctly, the will to power. The child is impressed by his own weakness in comparison with older people, and he wishes to become their equal."²⁰ This promotes understanding as well as identification between the child and the adult.²¹ This choice of imitation will in turn determine

¹⁷ Lili Peller, "Models of Children's Play," Mental Hygiene, XXXVI p. 66

¹⁸ H.E.Green, Psychological Abstracts (1934), VIII, 302

¹⁹ Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham, Infants Without Families (New York: International University Press, 1944), p. 118.

²⁰ Russel, pp. 68-69.

²¹ Read, p. 141.

his role.

But on further research, it was found out that admiration is rarely the cause for determining a choice. It was found out that he enjoys a power and prestige denied to him in reality.²² He takes the role of an adult because he feels a need to control and direct such situations. Such an act will relieve his feeling of helplessness when he is with others. This also serves him to accept commands of his parents when he is at home.²³

2. Role Assigned to an Inanimate Object.

Sometimes the child appoints a doll or a piece of wood or any kind of play material to act a certain role. It can also be an imaginary person who is playing with him. In such a situation the child feels differently when there is some body depending on him.²⁴

3. Choice Based on Fear.

The child sometimes takes the role of a person whom he fears. Freud gives several examples on this: "A child plays at being the doctor, after the doctor has administered a painful treatment or performed a minor operation. Anna Freud reports the case of the child who conquers the fear of crossing the dark hall by pretending to be the ghost she dreads to encounter."²⁵ In this case the child is inflicting her fear on another person. Sometimes the child chooses a role as a result of his peers' influence on the basis of superior strength or superior achievement. Fear of each other and

²² Peller, "Models of Children's Play." p. 66

²³ Read, p. 142.

²⁴ Peller, "Models of Children's Play." p. 67.

²⁵ Peller, "Models of Children's Play." p. 68.

admiration for each other are the deciding factors in this respect.²⁶

4. The Losing Party.

In some cases the child chooses to be the sick person, or take the role of a defeated person. This can be explained in several ways: A non-psychological explanation may be that the child chooses such a role because he is afraid he'll be excluded from that particular group. Another explanation may be that the child is passive himself. Finally the behavior can be explained by giving a broader meaning to the mechanism of "turning from the passive to the active experience." A child who chooses willingly to be passive or to be the victimized party and knows that he can stop the role whenever he pleases is not actually passive. "Even in his inactive role, he is self-steered and not a play ball."²⁷

5. Incognito Indulgence.

The child plays roles that are different from his real self, for instance, he plays at being an animal or a baby. Freud states: "The wish which dominates childhood is the wish to be big and adult and do as others are doing." This will enable the child to enjoy the pleasure of being old. This can be explained by assuming that the child is torn between two worlds. His superego is affected by his parents and teachers who he wants to please. But still he can't get rid of his childish pleasure, he soon declares: "This is not me, it is a puppy dog." Now he can permit himself to act childishly by crawling, getting dirty, "By declaring I am a baby now," he

²⁶ Freud, p. 43.

²⁷ Peller, "Models of Children's Play", p. 69.

permits himself to suck his thumb, insists on being carried around ... etc.
"A child living under great pressure is more likely to select a role along this line."

There is another form of incognito, when the child tries to repeat his mistakes so as to attract the attention of others. He sometimes encourages in another person an indulgence that one's conscience does not permit us.²⁸

6. Anticipatory Retaliation.

Sometimes when the child meets a conflict with his parents or teachers, he expresses his hostile feelings towards the doll. Such an attitude is called anticipatory retaliation. The opposite of this may be also true. For sometimes the child retaliates by treating the doll kindly: This indicates that the child is treating the doll as his mother should treat him, or as he wishes her to treat him.

7. Happy Ending.

The child plays out an incident that was unhappy to him once upon a time and plays it by adding to it a happy ending. He may repeat it over and over to gain the assurance that there will always be a happy ending, or that it is within his own power to bring about a happy ending.

8. Manipulation and Playful Repetition.

The child manipulates play so as to broaden his contact with reality. He manipulates and repeats an experience as every day play. Throwing a ball, letting sand run through the fingers ... etc. There is no drama in

²⁸ Keller, "Models of Children's Play", p. 69.

such play, for there is no plot, no climax and no specific role taken.

Children's play under the age of five has no goal, and resembles a dream. Children play together and repeat the same thing. "K. Buhler has termed this kind of activity with no goal. The mere functioning, the activity in itself brings pleasure." ²⁹

9. Expression of Pressing Needs.

Children seek the warmth and affection that he failed to get at home. Those who were pushed forward to adopt mature behavior, usually seek infantile roles. ³⁰

10. Play Offers an Opportunity to Drain Off Negative Feelings.

Children like other human beings meet situations that create anxiety in them. This anxiety is drained off in play in an aggressive and destructive way. "It is very important to accept them in play being sure only that the children are safe and that impulses are under control and kept on the "pretend" level". It is also important that the child should know that he should stop when he is asked to or else he'll harm himself and anxiety will not be drained off. ³¹

Very often children while expressing jokes and humorous things hide their true feelings toward that particular thing. Therefore the adult should be aware of that hidden meaning.

²⁹ Peller, Models of Children's Play", pp. 74-80.

³⁰ Ruth E. Hartley, Lawrence K. Frank and Robert M. Geldenson, Understanding Children's Play (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), pp. 32-33.

³¹ Read, p. 242-245.

Dramatic play is said to be of therapeutic value for children, for it helps children to drain off their feelings and play roles which will help them to clarify certain concepts in the world around them.³²

The Idiomatic Nature Of Dramatic Play

"It has long been held a truism that play is the natural language of the child. What has not been emphasized sufficiently is the fact that each child uses this language in an idiomatic fashion — that each word, each gesture, each action has a significance peculiar to him alone."³³

One has to go deep into behavioral pattern in order to understand its meaning. The child gives meaning and affection to his play materials and his peers as he really feels and thinks them to be. It is true that the child learns words and phrases from others, but he uses them in his own way and according to the meaning they have to him.³⁴

The role the child acts or the theme he performs indicates the true concern of the child.

Value Of Dramatic Play

1. Means for working out difficulties.

Through dramatic play the child works out his difficulties for himself so that he can meet the challenge of his world with confidence —

³² Read, p. 245

³³ Hartley, p. 46

³⁴ Hartley, p. 41

for example Ericson says: "... to play it out is the most natural auto-therapeutic measure childhood affords." ³⁵ Therefore the child used play to make up for defeats, suffering and frustrations.

2. Means for attaining harmony with the external world.

In play the child learns to relate his fantasies with the real world. Thus he attains equilibrium with the external world. Susan Isaacs says: "Play ... is supremely the activity which brings him psychic equilibrium in the early years."

3. Release tension.

Margaret Lowenfeld gives a high priority to "symbolic play" as an agent for drawing off inner tension. Isaacs adds "... the child is externalizing his inner drama - the various aspects of his inner personality - in just the way in which the creative artist in literature or painting does." The child does not only deal with his problems, but he also deals with his conception of grownups. e.g. Parents who are terrible, loving, deserting, when the child reenacts all these with the help of other children, his inner tension is released, and a new equilibrium of mental health and happiness is attained.

4. Sociability.

Dramatic play in the nursery school influences the social development of the child. As the child gets acquainted with the other children, his

³⁵ Hartley, p. 16

fantasy increases and thus he gains the experience of doing things together. The active cooperation in dramatic play will make social education effective. The child is no more an egocentric individual but a social being who is able to share and give-and-take.

5. Realism.

Research in child development has added that dramatic play " helps the child set boundaries between reality and unreality." This means that the very young child conceives play experience as something very real, whereas older children knew that it is a mere play and are able to differentiate between reality and unreality. Moreover younger children accept substitute objects for their satisfaction. Therefore dramatic play acts as a relief for the child's frustration and helps him adapt to the real world. ³⁶

An extensive investigation serves to make one fully acquainted with the main characteristics of children. A review of research studies on play follows:-

Gesell performed Behavior Developmental Tests to determine the main characteristics of the individual child in the first five years of life. The Behavior tests were made to be interesting to the child so as to help in the establishment of a rapport between the examiner and the child. The nature of the developmental examination involves three steps:-

³⁶ Hartley, pp. 18-26

- "1.- A preliminary interview.
- 2.- The formal behavior tests in an established order.
- 3.- A record of the results and a diagnostic review of the examination as a whole."

1. Interview

In the preliminary interview the time span is limited from five to ten minutes. A rapport should be established between the child and the examiner. The mother is present with the child and she cooperates with the examiner. The examiner explores all the abilities of the child including:

- 1.- Motor field
- 2.- Language field
- 3.- Adaptive and personal social fields.
- 4.- Child's personal reactions to his environment and his routines.
- 5.- Emotional behavior

The questions are to be varied i.e. positive and negative or else the mother will be embarrassed by the affirmative reply.

2. Order of the Examination.

Gesell used eight examination sequences and four maturity zones. Therefore the standard of each child depends on the age and the maturity zone. The key ages are: 4, 16, 28, 40 weeks; 12, 18, 24, 36 months. The maturity zones are as follows: Supine, Sitting, Locomotor and Pre-Kindergarten.

The sequences for 4 weeks and 16 weeks begin with the supine situation where the infant is placed on the examining table. The mother stands on

his left. The 28 and 40 weeks and 12 months maturity, the child sits supported or unsupported by the mother or by a fastened belt.

The 18, 24, 36 months maturity the child can sit on a chair, play with toys and is shown the kindergarten table with a picture book on it.

The examination sequences are to be adapted to the age maturity of the child. It is first, determined whether the child fits to the supine, sitting locomotor or pre-kindergarten zone. If there are no contradictions, then the sequence which is nearest ^{to} his chronological age is selected. According to Gesell, it is very important to specify the amount of time for each behavior situation. One has to observe and find out how much time is needed for each child behavior situation.

3. Recording and Review.

One is to record the information during the behavior period. Or the examiner can train an assistant who sits behind the screen and records data.³⁷

In scoring any behavior pattern, the child is checked a (+) sign, means that the child manifests the pattern; a (+ +) sign means that the child manifests more mature pattern; a (-) sign means that the child is not yet mature enough.³⁸ The experimenter matches and compares the findings with those of the normal child and records them as retarded or accelerated behavior patterns.³⁹

³⁷ Arnold Gesell, Developmental Diagnosis (New York: Paul B. Hoeber, Inc., 1947), pp. 91-105.

³⁸ Gesell, Developmental Diagnosis, p. 403.

³⁹ Gesell, Developmental Diagnosis, p. 105.

The test materials that Gesell used are as follows:-

Play material consisted of cubes of different sizes and colors; household materials as cups and bells; pictures and crayons of different colors, and clinical utensils as the clinical table.⁴⁰

Since the writer is interested in the age groups three and four, she will summarize the findings on these groups given by Gesell. The findings are presented under four major fields of functional organization:-

1. Motor Behavior - Includes postural reactions, prehension, locomotion, general bodily coordination and specific motor skills.
2. Adaptive Behavior - Includes perceptual, manual, verbal and mental adjustment.
3. Language - Embraces all behavior which has to do with dramatic expression, communication and comprehension.
4. Personal-social Behavior - Consists of the child's personal reactions and adjustment to other persons and to the impacts of culture.

Three-Year Old

The three-year old enjoys gross motor activity like the two-year old, but he uses it in a more liberal way. He participates in sedentary plays for larger periods than the two-year old. He is interested in finer manipulations of play materials. He will, for example, work persistently at a puzzle box which imprisons a ball. Having attained the ball, he prefers

⁴⁰ Gesell, Developmental Diagnosis, p. 378.

to re-solve
change in

Three

he is now
ten cube

equipment

of the

sudden

down

and

A

are more numerous, more

Accordingly he displays a new sense of order.

tidiness. Give him four blocks to play with, he spontaneously align them in a neat square of four. Lay out four blocks in a row, train-fashion, put a "chimney on the block at one end, he likes to balance the arrangement with a symmetrical chimney at the other end." Still at this age he can't name colors, but he differentiates between them.

He can copy a circle, can place round pegs in round holes, and square pegs in square holes. "His perception of form and of special relations is still very dependent upon gross postural and manual adjustments."

He is not able to copy a cross from a model, but he needs an adult to demonstrate for him.

the three year-old child to feel more secure.
Once you tell him the right word,
the word, and enjoys doing it as well.
the conformity of the three year-old
senses; he is more able
his words are more
instruments for
his voice-
increased.
to be
as
are more numerous, more
Accordingly he displays a new sense of order.
tidiness. Give him four blocks to play with, he spontaneously
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He is not able to copy a cross from a model, but he needs an adult
to demonstrate for him.

to re-solve the puzzle rather than to play the ball. This reflects a change in motor interest, for Iva would prefer to play with the ball.

Three shows more ability to control his muscles, such as in drawing he is more defined and less diffuse. Now he can build a tower of nine or ten cubes. This shows a progress in maturation of new neuro-motor equipments. Still in this age he is not apt to make oblique planes in spite of the progress that he made in horizontal and vertical planes.

Now the three year-old child is more sure of his steps. He can make sudden stops and turn corners. He manages to go upstairs alone, and jumps down with both feet. He can pedal a tricycle. He is more in equilibrium and balanced. He can stand on one foot for a second or more.

Adaptive Behavior:

The child's "discriminations, whether manual, perceptual, or verbal are more numerous, more clear cut. His motor coordination is nicer. Accordingly he displays a new sense of order and arrangement and even tidiness. Give him four blocks to play with, he spontaneously tends to align them in a neat square of four. Lay out four blocks in a row, train-fashion, put a "chimney on the block at one end, he likes to balance the arrangement with a symmetrical chimney at the other end." Still at this age he can't name colors, but he differentiates between them.

He can copy a circle, can place round pegs in round holes, and square pegs in square holes. "His perception of form and of special relations is still very dependent upon gross postural and manual adjustments."

He is not able to copy a cross from a model, but he needs an adult to demonstrate for him.

Greater maturity lead the three year-old child to feel more secure. He is more fluid in his reactions. Once you tell him the right word, he'll alter his motor act to suit the word, and enjoys doing it as well. Such a psychological gain indicates the conformity of the three year-old child, a main characteristic of him.

Language.

At three years, the child uses words in sentences; he is more able and interested in language than before. "At three years words are more fully disengaged from the gross motor system and become instruments for designating percepts, concepts, ideas, relationships." By now his vocabulary reaches a thousand. His appreciation of the language also increased. He can entertain others as well as be entertained. This helps him to be a delightful companion. He loves new and big words. He dramatizes as to perfect his talking.

Personal-Social Behavior.

"You can bargain with Three." He knows now that he is a person as you are. He is willing to stop an act provided that you promise him to do it later. When given a mental examination, he desires to please the examiner, and he does so, by answering the questions. He stays in his chair waiting for the next command. Suggest to him and he'll cooperate. He has his own words to express his feelings, desires and problems. He takes notice of words. He has a sense of self and of status, for he dislikes such babyish commissions as "show me where is your nose" . "But his sense of personal self and of other personal selves is imperfect and fragmentary." He

makes affectionate expressions to his mother. He shows angry attacks to objects as chair, toy ... etc. Such outburst expressions are usually brief. He feels anxiety and is capable of jealousy which may cause him to scream and crawl on the floor.

The three year-old fears rubber bands and may tremble at the movement of a mechanical toy. He talks to himself as if he were talking to another person. He makes people laugh by his laugh. He notices the emotional expressions of others and tries his best to please them and make acquaintance with them.

Even though he enjoys playing and sharing toys with others, still he prefers solitary and parallel play. The social experiences that he engages in will bring more insight to him. He is beginning to understand what it means to wait for turns and he is willing to do so.

He is now well at routine activities. He feeds himself and spills very little. "His natural propensity to imitate and to conform ordinarily makes him obedient." He gets even tantrums more quickly than at earlier age. Thumbsucking is more likely to occur when he is thwarted. If he wants to resist he uses language.

He is interested in dressing and undressing, unbuttoning, takes off shoes and pants. He is becoming less dependent in going to sleep. He sleeps at night without wetting. He can toilet himself to a certain extent during day time. He asks questions to which he knows the answers. This is to make him more sure of what he does.

Now the writer proceeds to the characteristics of the four year-old child.⁴¹

⁴¹ Arnold Gesell, The First Five Years of Life (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1940), pp. 41-46.

Four Year Old

Motor Characteristic:

The four year old is said to be "out of bounds". He runs in a more easy way than the three year-old child. He jumps, he kicks, he throws stones. He gains a good balance of his body. He can balance himself on one foot for several seconds. He also maintains his balance while walking on a 6 cm. walking board.

He likes to try any motor trick which is not too difficult, for he enjoys accomplishments. Much of his motion is based on his legs. There is also no totality in his bodily responses, legs, trunk, shoulders, arms. This makes his joints more mobile. He can also button his clothes and lace his shoes.

In drawing, the four year-old gives particular attention to isolated details. For example in copying a circle, he copies it better than the three year-old. He draws it in a clockwise direction. He is able to draw an oblique line and vertical lines into a cross.

Adaptive Behavior

The four year-old child asks questions to have a clear idea about the nature and social world he lives in. He feels his presence among a group but still his mental scope is limited. He has a poor understanding of the past and the future, even in stories he has very little interest in plots. He can count to four or more, but his number concept merely goes beyond one, two and many.

His imagination seems to be wide. He may have imaginary playmates

and companions. He asks questions that are merely not existing, but these serve to clear up confusion for him. His mind is always busy, compares and combines things. When listening to a storyteller, he is unimaginative in his thinking and little details tend to confuse him, but out of these he can create metaphors that attract the adult's attention. He is moved and tends to re-enact in his body posture and gesture by what he is told. When drawing a man the trunk does not appear till he is five. When placing the eyes, he comments by saying: "Now he can see."

When playing with blocks, he builds both vertically and horizontally. He likes to create and produce things. He likes to alter the kind of play he is playing with rather than repeating it again.

Language.

"Questioning reaches its peak at four." He elaborates and creates things to an unlimited extent. He likes to giggle so as to attract the attention and establish a relationship with others. Bathroom and elimination words come into use and he will rhyme them too with a very silly laughter which shows that he really appreciates their inappropriateness. He is more interested in ^{ic} netting how to answer rather than in the explanation itself. He doesn't ask questions that he already knows the answer like the three year old child does. But the four year-old child asks so as to gain information and to arrange his images. He associates things e.g. while naming a cat he speaks about his dog too. He does not like to say things again, he will simply tell you that he said it before. While telling a story he mixes between facts and fiction.

Personal-Social Behavior

By the age of four, the child becomes more independent and sociable. He is willing to go to the examination room without his mother. He may move his feet and twist during the examination. He takes more care of the task you give him than the three year-old child. He also makes more comments.

At home, the four year-old child needs little care and direction. He can eat and converse at the same time. He is able to dress and undress with little aid. He can lace his shoes (but can't tie them). He is also capable of combing his hair and brushing his teeth. He no longer naps during the day. If ever, it is a long nap for one to one-and-a-half. At night when he goes to bed, he falls asleep in a short time and needs to take nothing with him to bed. He can go to the toilet by himself and needs very little help. He is interested in looking at others in the bathroom to satisfy his curiosities. The four year-old child is more sociable than the three year-old child, and indulges in associative play. He prefers a group of two or three children. He shares objects and suggests turns, but he is by no means orderly.

The child of four talks too much. His talk is full with the first personal pronoun and rationalizes his act by saying that he was absent: "I can't make it because my mother won't let me," "I can't make it because I don't want." Such interest is social. It denotes an awareness of the attitude and opinions of others. He has unreasonable fears, such as fear of darkness, feathers, old man ... etc. This denotes that he is not as mature as his speech suggests. Because of this immaturity, he is not able to differentiate between reality and fiction.⁴²

⁴² Gesell, The First Five Years of Life, pp. 46-53.

A research was done by Mildred Parten on 42 normal children who attended nursery school. Her research was based on observations and she developed a scale of six types of social participation.

The child's personality grows as a result of social participation. The more he meets children, the more socially he becomes and the more opportunities are available for play. Such social interaction at home and in the nursery school provides several types of social participation. Following is a summary on the types of social Participation:-

Types of Social Participation

The nursery school provides opportunities for children to participate in different types of play. Thus there are degrees and types of social Participation.

1. Unoccupied Behavior.

"The child apparently is not playing at all, at least in the usual sense, but occupies himself with watching anything which happens of momentary interest. When there is nothing exciting taking place, he plays with his own body, gets on and off chairs, just stands around, follows the teacher, or sits in one spot glancing around the room."

Actually such a child is not really playing. He is a child who notices others, or else plays with his own physique.

2. Solitary Play.

"The child plays alone and independently with toys that are different from those used by the children within speaking distance and makes no

effort to get close to or speaks to the other children. His interest is centered upon his own activity, and he pursues it without reference to what others are doing."⁴³

A solitary child therefore is a child who does not care about others and doesn't care to indulge with them socially. He is satisfied by his own deeds and equipments.

Solitary play is a characteristic of the early preschool child. Bridges in her observation of early preschool children, found out that they are quarrelsome and disorderly in the absence of an adult.⁴⁴

3. Onlooker Behavior.

"The child spends most of his time watching the others play. He often talks to the playing children, asks questions, or gives suggestions, but does not enter into the play himself. He stands or sits within speaking distance of the group so that he can see and hear all that is taking place. Thus he differs from the unoccupied child who notices anything that happens to be exciting and especially interested in groups of children.

Such a child is somehow better than the previous types, for his participation indicates that he is interested in something and is after a certain goal.⁴⁵

⁴³ Mildred Parten, "Social Behavior of Preschool Children," Roger G. Barker, Jacob S. Koussin and Herbert F. Wright, Child Behavior and Development (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1943), p. 512.

⁴⁴ Marian E. Breckenridge and E. Lee Vincent, Child Development (London: W.B. Saunders Company, 1945), p. 444.

⁴⁵ Barker, p. 512.

4. Parallel Play.

"The child plays independently, but the activity he chooses naturally brings him among other children. He plays with toys which are like those which the children around him are using, but he plays with the toys as he sees fit and does not try to influence the activity of the children near him. Thus he plays beside rather than with other children."⁴⁶

Such a child is more socialized. He is attempting to accomplish what his peers are doing without interfering or interrupting them. The child is moving towards maturity, therefore the teacher should welcome such a behavior for it is a sign towards sociability.⁴⁷

5. Associative Play.

"The child plays with other children. There are borrowing and lending of play material; following one another with trains and wagons and attempts to control which children may or may not play in the group. All engage in similar if not identical activity; there is no division of labor and no organization of activity. Each child acts as he wishes, does not subordinate his interests to the group."⁴⁸

In this type of play children share ideas and express their motive during play. It is a group activity where no one leads or dictates but shares.

⁴⁶ Barker, p. 512.

⁴⁷ Breckenridge, p. 444.

⁴⁸ Barker, p. 513.

6. Cooperative or Organized Supplementary Play.

"The child plays in a group that is organized for the purpose of making some material product, of striving to attain some competitive goal, of dramatizing situations of adult or group life, or of playing formal games. There is a marked sense of belonging or not belonging to the group. The conduct of the group situation is in the hands of one or two members, who direct the activity of the others. The goal as well as the method of attaining it necessitates a division of labor, the taking of different roles by the various group members, and the organization of activity so that the efforts of one child are supplemented by those of another."⁴⁹

Children here play cooperatively. They assign that each will play a different role. Usually there is a leader to lead the play and control it.

Play was found to be related to factors such as age, sex, and education. Following is a presentation of the relationships.

Age

Age is said to influence play. Child study provided us with facts about sex and age and how and when they influence play. Children are known to have less ability than adults, they have different instincts, different abilities, different traits, different likes and dislikes. Development therefore is divided into stages, but there is difficulty in such a division. First: There are certain exceptions and irregularities of different periods of development. e.g. most children walk before they talk, but in some

⁴⁹ Barker, p. 514.

situations this is not the case; so such a division is not universally accepted.

Second. Stages of development have been studied from different points of view. Some studied growth in height and weight, some have studied the development of emotions, and others studied it according to mental growth.⁵⁰

At the age of three, the child uses sentences in his speech, using words as tools of thought.⁵¹ Other objects that do not belong to him start to attract his attention. He is interested in the household, e.g. sweeping, dusting ... etc. He gains more control over his muscles. Thus he is able to imitate.⁵²

At the age of four, the child asks numerous questions, perceives analogies, has the tendency to conceptualize a generalization. He is nearly self dependent in routines at home!⁵³

"From two to seven years the child can use language and the internalization of action becomes possible." His concept of quantity is weak, though symbolic functions appear.⁵⁴

Sex.

By the age of three, there seems to be difference in play roles taken by boys and girls.

⁵⁰ Bowen, pp. 240-247.

⁵¹ Leonard Carmichael, Manual of Child Psychology (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1946), p. 299.

⁵² Luella A. Palmer, Play Life In The First Eight Years (New York: Ginn and Company, 1916), pp. 166-167.

⁵³ Carmichael, p. 299.

⁵⁴ Tracy S. Kendler, Concept Formation, Annual Review of Psychology, XII (1961), p. 465.

Lehman in his research found out that boys tend to engage in organized play, whereas girls were found to play very few games which require a high degree of organization.⁵⁵ The girl engages mostly in house-play and the number of roles they take is quite large. Take turns as being mothers, nurses, neighbors, visitors ... etc. They cook feed and care for children. They take a walk and clean the house, iron, dress and undress ... etc. Boys on the other hand play as being captains of boats, pilots of airplanes, divers and they act as garage men and machines. Such sex differences are greater at this age, namely three and four, because children like to imitate the activities of the same-sex parent.⁵⁶

But why does such a division occur? The question was discussed with the preschool center supervision and it was found out:

1. That the materials were usually set to suggest female household duties rather than male activities. When more male items were included, such as shoes, jackets, caps, pipes, boxes ... etc. the division was much narrower. Also the addition of water-play as pots, tins, dishes, helped a lot in male participation.
2. Another discovery was that, when the group was predominantly male, a sharp division between girls and boys occurred. But when the group was equally divided, the division did not occur.

Two solutions were suggested:

1. Add more doll corners so that when the girls occupy one, the boys will also have an opportunity to engage in other corners.

⁵⁵ Harvey C. Lehman and Paul A. Witty, Psychology of Play Activities (New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., 1927), p. 93.

⁵⁶ Lehman, p. 103.

2. Divide the group equally so as to have equal number of girls and boys.

It was also suggested that the sphere of knowledge should be widened. Children should be taken visits to places where both girls and boys participate equally so that the division of roles in their world will be lessened, such as visits to bakeries, tailor shops, offices ... etc. where both men and women contribute.⁵⁷

"Play behavior is a function of so many variables that it is unsatisfactory to characterize most activities as belonging primarily to one sex or the other."⁵⁸

Such a division of taking roles in play, occurs only to the child when somebody puts the idea into his mind for example, that dolls are for girls and cars are for boys.

At the age of four, the child's ideas are more connected and related together. He now undresses the baby, gives it a bath, puts it to sleep and then takes up a book to read.⁵⁹

Education

Education influences the development of the child with respect to its several phases. Beginning with the nursery school, education helps in "serving the needs of two-three-four-year-old children by offering them experiences adapted to what is now known about the growth needs of these age levels."⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Hartley, pp. 47-50.

⁵⁸ Hartley, p. 50.

⁵⁹ Palmer, pp. 166-167.

⁶⁰ Read, p. 20.

The nursery is a place where some of the needs of children are met. The program of the nursery school should be flexible and arranged so as to meet the needs of children.

The nursery school will be discussed in terms of its contributions towards the development of the child.

The Contributions Of The Nursery School Towards The Development Of The Child.

1. Physical Development.

The preschool period is marked by motor activities employing the large muscles. The nursery school provides activities that will stimulate the child into action. The large play materials and particularly in large muscle development, motor control and body balance, such as jungle jim, climbing stairs, ladders, slides, swings ... etc.⁶¹

The small play equipments are essential as well, for the development of the finer muscles and for coordination, such plays are the small-sized blocks and cubes ... etc.⁶²

2. Social Development.

The Nursery school provides an opportunity for the child to meet children of his own age of different types and shapes, thus he'll learn more about society.⁶³ Under the guidance of the adult the child learns

⁶¹ D.E.M. Gardner, Education Under Eight (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1949), p. 18.

⁶² Ruth Updegraff, Practice in Preschool Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938), p. 59.

⁶³ Russell, pp. 122-123.

to establish a healthy spirit to give and take, and his language improves by listening and conversing with the adult and other children.⁶⁴

In the nursery school, the child learns to live in a democratic way. He learns to consider the rights of others but to retain his own rights too when needed.⁶⁵

3. Emotional Development.

The child develops emotionally in the nursery school through his contact with the world around him. He faces things and is able to express his feelings verbally. He gains self-confidence through the achievements that he does in the nursery school e.g. hanging his clothes when he comes early in the morning and using the toilet alone ... etc.⁶⁶

4. Mental Development.

The nursery school provides opportunities full of experiences that introduce the child into the world and nature which will widen his intellectual capacities and comprehension of things. There is evidence that the nursery school effects the child's intelligence (I.Q.) in later years of schooling.⁶⁷ A study was done by Wellman to find out the effect of nursery school upon I.Q. He found out that children who attended nursery school have a higher I.Q. But still one can't draw a conclusion that merely from attending nursery school, a child's intelligence score will

⁶⁴ Dorothy Walter Baruch, Parents and Children Go to School (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1939) , p. 282.

⁶⁵ Dorothy W. Baruch, Understanding Young Children (New York: Bureau of Publication. Teachers College, 1949) , pp. 24-25.

⁶⁶ Baruch, Parents and Children Go to School, pp. 138,233.

⁶⁷ Baruch, Parents and Children Go to School, p. 253.

be increased.⁶⁸

The aim of education is to develop the personality of the individual and of all individuals in society. Thus the curriculum as well as guidance are important for the development of a good society.

1. Supervision of Play.

The teacher must accept the responsibility for supervising the child. She is required to have a complete data about the behavior of each child. She should be able to identify the solitary child from the rest and should be able to devise a system to improve his situation. Nowadays, educators are becoming conscious of the need for direct supervision of play,

2. Curriculum Construction.

Choosing curriculum material is very important, "Professor Brigg" has asserted that the school should teach the child to do better the things that he'll do whether he'll be instructed or uninstructed regarding them." It seems logical that the duty of the school is to train a child that he'll be equiped not only to take part in the experiences of the world of actuality but will be prepared to modify these experiences so as to promote human welfare. The progressive teacher seeks not only to teach informational material but to develop also desirable ideals and attitudes.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Alfred L. Baldwin, Behavior and Development In Childhood (New York: The Dryden Press, 1955) , pp. 405-408.

⁶⁹ Harvey C. Lehman and Paul A. Witty, Psychology of Play Activities (New York: A.S.Barnes and Co., 1927) , pp. 224-227.

3. The Problem Of Interest in Reference to Classroom Instruction.

Interest of the child in a classroom situation is necessary for the maximum efficiency. Therefore the teacher should be after utilizing the interest of the child. The teacher should have the patience to find out whether the boy or girl has the will to learn.

The interest of the child is very necessary for successful teaching. Therefore it is important to present interesting activities in accordance of the interest of the child.

What are the factors that bring about the interest of the child.

By meeting the needs of the child, through particular forms of activities.

"A crucial problem for the teacher is that of identifying the needs of the children and allowing these needs expression in the self-initiated activities of the classroom."

Usually the activities in which the child engages most and chooses them voluntarily represent their felt needs. Whereas the activities that the child chooses because they want to, may be considered their play behavior.

The educator should consider the actual interests of present-day children in making a curriculum.⁷⁰

4. The Problem of Interest and Vocational Guidance.

It is obvious that the mere interest is not an adequate criterion upon which to base the selection of one's life role. The individual aptitude and ability must be considered. The vocational counselor must

⁷⁰ Lehman, pp. 228-230.

evaluate the various interests of the child in terms of his ability and in terms of the individual or social values, occurring from the interests of the child. Moreover interest is also said to reveal the abilities of the person.⁷¹

⁷¹ Lehman, p. 230.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Mildred Parten in her research on the Social Behavior of Preschool Children, categorized six types of social participation. Her research was based on short sample observations on 42 normal children who attended nursery school.

The investigator of this study used the pattern that Mildred Parten used in her research on types of social participation. This was used to study dramatic play as it takes place in the doll-corner of the Nursery School of the Beirut College for Women. Data was then analyzed to determine differences in play as it relates to sex, age, nationality, occupation of parents, number of siblings, number of play equipment available to the child at home and his emotional status. The chapter, therefore discusses:

- a - Description of the subjects
- b - Measurement technique
- c - Analysis of data

a - Description of the subjects.

The subjects were boys and girls that came from three nationalities, namely, Lebanese, American and Egyptian. The children were all normal and

had no physical or mental defects. The subjects were 15 in number, seven girls and eight boys who enrolled in the Nursery School of the Beirut College for Women. They were three and four years of age.

The subjects were not selected out of the total group; those children that appeared most in the doll-corner were taken as subjects.

The sex, age, nationality, language spoken by the child, occupation of parents, siblings, play equipment at home, general health and emotional problems are all summarized in table I.

b - Measurement Technique.

The assessment of the variable in the study, namely, dramatic play of children, was done by means of observations. The writer observed the children during the months of January and February every day except on holidays. The observations were of indoor play in the doll-corner. Data were taken in the morning whenever the children felt like engaging themselves in the doll-corner. At this time, the child was free to play with any toy he or she wished and with any children or alone as he or she wished. Such a method offers the opportunity to act freely with no set pattern of behavior imposed on the child. The observational records were short samples of behavior, the duration of which ranged from two to five minutes on each child, daily. This seemed satisfactory with respect to providing as much as possible, a wide sample of behavior.

c - Analysis of Data.

Data was analysed in terms of categorizing the play behavior of children under patterns of social participation; relationships between kinds

of play and other factors were also determined. The findings are summarized in the following chapter.

DATA ON CHILDREN

TABLE I

Name	Sex	Age		Nationality	Language spoken by the child	Occupation	
		Year	Month			Father	Mother
A	boy	4		Egyptian	English	Professor	Teacher
B	girl	3	7	American	English	Teacher	Unemployed
C	girl	4	5	American	English	Professor	Housewife
D	boy	3	6	American	English	Businessman	Housewife
E	girl	3	8	American	English	Surgeon	Housewife
F	boy	No Record Available					
G	boy	3	3	American	English (Arabic)	Professor	Housewife
H	girl	3	3	Lebanese	English	Chartered Accountant	Housewife
I	boy	4	3	American	English (Arabic)	Engineer	Housewife
J	boy	No Record Available					
K	girl	3	9	Lebanese	Arabic (English)	Professor	Teacher and Housewife
L	boy	4	2	Lebanese	Arabic (English)	Merchant	Housewife
M	girl	3	4	Lebanese	Arabic (English)	Engineer	Housewife
N	girl	3	4	Lebanese	Arabic (English)	Engineer	Housewife
O	boy	3	2	Lebanese	Arabic (English)	Engineer	Housewife

Siblings		Play equipment at home	General health	Emotional Problems
Brother	Sister			
1		17	Normal	Wetting and stuttering when under strain
		13	Normal	Withdraws from activity when tired, seeks security of favored blanket, and thumb
	1	14	Normal	
		14	Normal	
		11	Normal	
			Normal	
1		13	Normal	Needs affection and attention in a calm and understanding way
		11	Normal	
1		11	Normal	
			Normal	
	2	22	Normal	
	2	14	Normal	
1		18	Normal	
	2	8	Normal	
1	2	12	Normal	

CHAPTER IX

THE FINDINGS

Following is a presentation and a discussion of the findings of the study.

Table II gives a summary of the frequency distribution of social participation behavior of each child. The first column refers to the name of the child, the second refers to the age in years and months, the third refers to the total number of records observed about the child and the last six refer to the types of social participation.

Several facts can be drawn from table III. There are marked individual differences of children who engaged in each type of activity. These differences will be discussed in terms of the following factors: sex, age, nationality, occupation of father and mother, number of siblings, number of play equipment provided by parents and emotional problems of children.

Sex.

As shown in table II, unoccupied behavior proves to be the least frequently and only one girl uses it. Five boys and three girls engage in solitary play. This shows that boys engage more than girls, in this study,

**THE RELATIVE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH EACH CHILD ENGAGED
IN SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**

TABLE II

Name	Age		Total Observation	Frequency distribution of Social Participation		
	Year	Month		Unoccup- ied	Solitary	Onlooker
A	4		19			
B	3	7	17			2
C	4	5	14			1
D	3	6	14		4	
E	3	8	13			1
F			10		3	1
G	3	3	10		2	1
H	3	3	7		3	4
I	4	3	6			1
J			5		1	1
K	3	9	4		1	1
L	4	2	3		1	
M	3	4	3			
N	3	4	3	2	1	
O	3	2	2			

Parallel	Associative	Cooperative
2	13	4
2	12	1
1	8	4
4	5	1
8	7	2
5	1	
4	3	
3	2	
3		
1		
2		
3		
2		

in solitary play.

Nearly and equal number of girls and boys, five and four respectively, participate in onlooker play. The case is different with the parallel and associative play that are used more by boys than by girls. Of the total number of children, eight boys and six girls engage in parallel play while five boys and three girls participate in associative play. Five children, three girls and two boys engage in cooperative play.

It seems that the boys in the present study could be described as more sociable than the girls while the girls, more than the boys assume roles of leadership in homemaking activities.

Table III summarizes the roles taken by boys and girls. Boys it seems, take the role of policemen and fathers, whereas girls take the role of mothers and maids. This indicates that boys engage mostly in masculine roles, and girls engage in feminine roles, though both equipment and opportunities for boys and girls are equally supplied in the Nursery School.

The roles of doggies and babies were taken over by girls and boys; with this respect, the sex differentiation as to roles is obvious.

Age.

Children who engage in cooperative play are older than the rest of the children. These same children seem also to participate mostly in associative and parallel play. Their total observations are highest in number. Their ages range between three years and six months and four years and five months. In this age range children are known to be more sociable than the younger group who are under the age of three.¹ "F", "G" and "I" who are of age

¹ Gesell, The First Five Years of Life, pp. 50-53.

KIND OF ROLE TAKEN BY GIRLS AND BOYS

TABLE III

Name	Sex	Age		ROLES					
		Year	Month	Mother	Father	Baby	Maid	Dog	Policeman
A	boy	4			1	1		3	3
B	girl	3	7	4		1		6	
C	girl	4	5	3				3	
D	boy	3	6		3	1		1	4
E	girls	3	8	1		1	1		
F	boy				2			1	
G	boy	3	3			1			3
H	girl	3	3	2					
I	boy	4	3		1				
J	boy				2				2
K	girl	3	9			2		1	1
L	boy	4	2		1				
M	girl	3	4				1		
N	girl	3	4			1			
O	boy	3	2						

three years and three months and four years and three months seem to participate more in the parallel and associative play than in the onlooker and solitary play. This may be due to individual differences.

Out of the total number of observations which is 130, 11 children, ages ranging between three and four, seem to take part in the onlooker and solitary play. Only one girl, three years four months uses unoccupied play.

Nationality.

There are six Lebanese children, six American and one Egyptian.

The American children speak English, two of them also speak a little Arabic. Conversely, the Lebanese speak Arabic and some English in addition. The Egyptian boy speaks only English.

Therefore, neither the nationality nor the language prove to be a significant factor in the play of the children. But as the table indicates, these children who are of the American nationality engage mostly in the associative and cooperative play, whereas the Lebanese engage in solitary, onlooker and parallel play. One Lebanese only engages in unoccupied play. This would raise the question whether the American children are more sociable than the Lebanese children.

Occupation.

The occupation of the mother seems to be of some significance in the child's play. Most of the children whose mothers are housewives appear to engage more in associative and cooperative play. This may be due to the fact that children whose mothers are housewives have the opportunity to spend more time with them which increases sociability in the doll-corner.

There is one child "A" whose mother's occupation is teaching and he is very sociable and interested in the doll-corner. His total number of observation is 19, which is the highest. This may be that his mother teaches when the child is in the Nursery School and the rest of the day she spends with her child.

Children whose fathers are professors, seem to be the most sociable. They engage mostly in the doll-corner.

On the other hand, children whose fathers are engineers, don't show much signs of sociability.

The child whose father is a surgeon seems to be a sociable child. Three children whose fathers are business men, show differences in sociability. The sociable child engages 14 times in the doll-corner. The other two children are not sociable as the first child, for they engage in the doll-corner 7 and 3 times respectively. This may be due to individual differences.

Siblings.

The number of siblings may account for sociability on the part of some individuals. Four children, each having one sibling, show signs of sociability and engage most in associative, cooperative and parallel play.

Three children who have siblings ranging from one to three in number join most the parallel play. These children may become more sociable in the presence of siblings.

One child who has two siblings prove to be very quiet and participates most in unoccupied and solitary play.

On the other hand, four children who had no sibling prove to be sociable and engage in cooperative, associative and parallel play. Three other

children who had no sibling seem to be unsociable.

Therefore, one can conclude that the presence of siblings may be a cause of sociability, but it is never the only cause, for there are children who have siblings and are not sociable at all.

Number of Play Equipment Provided by Parents.

As shown in table I and II, children who join most in dramatic play are six in number. They are supplied by play equipment ranging from 11 to 17 in number. The rest of the children who are seven in number didn't engage as much, though their parents provide them with quite a good number of play equipment ranging from 11 to 22.

The child who is the most quiet girl and who engages least in social activities, has the least number, eight, of play equipment at home.

Emotional Problem.

Out of 15 children, only three children are rated by their parents as having emotional problems. All of them do not show any of their emotional problems during the dramatic play. This may be due to the fact that they are relaxed with their playmates.

Two of these children who have emotional problems are very sociable. This may mean that their problems may not be very serious to affect their sociability. The third child who has emotional problems, is a sociable child for he appears ten times in the doll-corner, but he is not as sociable as the other two who engaged 19 and 17 respectively. This may be because he is younger or it may be that play did not help him to solve his problems to the extent it did the other two.

The following chapter gives a brief summary of the findings and some interpretations.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The following chapter presents a brief summary of findings plus some interpretations and suggestions.

I. Findings

a - Sex

The findings show that boys engage more than girls in social activities. This could be traced back to their tending to indulge in organized play. Girls, on the other hand, were found to play very few games which require a high degree of organization.¹

Moreover, the writer realized that girls take feminine roles whereas boys take masculine roles. This is shown by the fact that girls engage mostly in house play whereas boys prefer to take the roles of captains and fathers.² This could be interpreted in terms of identification: Boys identify with their fathers and girls with their mother.

Such sex differences are greater at this age, namely three and four,

¹ Lehman, p. 93.

² Hartley, p. 53.

because children like to imitate the activities of the same-sex parent. As they mature, their imitation decreases and they tend to engage in the activities of the opposite sex. This may be due to the fact that, with added maturation, there is an increase in sociability and interaction between the sexes.³

The roles of doggies and babies were taken over similarly by boys and girls. Usually the child takes over such a role when he wants to act childishly or when he is under great pressure.⁴

b - Age

The writer found out that those who are around three years old, prefer solitary and parallel play -- whereas those who are four years old indulge mostly in associative play. These findings support those of Gesell. However, individual differences also account for this finding; there are a few children, four years old, who were found to indulge in parallel play.

c - Siblings

The presence of siblings may account for differences in sociability among children, four years old. Three children of age four who have one sibling each are found to be sociable, whereas one child, four years old, has two siblings but is not sociable. Three children of age three, who have siblings are found to be unsociable, whereas another child who is three years old and has a sibling is found to be sociable.

³ Lehman, p. 103.

⁴ Lili Peller, "Models of Children's Play" Mental Hygiene, XXXVI (1952), 69.

It seems that the presence of siblings accounts for sociability more with the four-year-old than it does with the three-year-old. This seems to support what the literature says about sociability at the age of four.

d - Emotional Problems

Out of 15 children, three were diagnosed to have emotional problems at home.

Several studies were done by Blatz, Chant and Markey on the emotional development of children. They found out that such emotional problems may occur at the preschool level.⁵

However, two of the three children were found to be sociable. This may indicate that their problems are not serious enough, or, that their family atmosphere contributed to their sociability. The third child was not as sociable as the other two children. This may be due to the lack of attention he received at home and in school.

II. Interpretations and Suggestions.

Authorities in the field of psychology have developed a number of theories on play and its importance.

The superfluous Energy Theory which has been called Schiller-Spencer Theory, considers surplus energy the mere cause of all play. What about sick and tired persons? The Recreation Theory, considers play as a means of relaxation. This could be the case, but not always. The Instinct Theory is another aspect of play, which supplements the two former ones by intro-

⁵ Carmichael, pp. 760-761.

ducing the notion of play being an innate tendency, The inheritance Theory is in close relation with the instinctive one. However, according to the writer, none of these is sufficient by itself to explain play. Play could better be explained by a combination of all these theories; such a resultant theory should take into consideration principles of development, principles of learning, the concept of individual differences and the concept of developmental tasks.

The writer thinks that specifying her study to one phase of sociability, that of dramatic play in the doll corner, is important. She, however, suggests that an interesting study could be made by relating doll-play behavior to intelligence. A relationship between kinds of play equipment and developmental quotients may give out interesting conclusions.

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