

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: THE SOCIOCULTURAL ENVIRONMENT, MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND
KOREAN CHILDREN'S AWARENESS OF SEX-TRAIT STEREOTYPES

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The awareness of sex-trait stereotypes among 120, eight-year-old children from intact families in both rural and urban areas in Korea were investigated. The rural sample included 20 boys and 20 girls attending the Damyang-Dong Primary School in Damyang-Eup, Korea. These subjects came primarily from farm families of the upper-lower and lower-middle classes. The urban sample included 40 boys and 40 girls attending the Bokwang Primary School in a residential area of Seoul, the capital city of Korea. These subjects came from families of the lower-middle and upper-middle classes. Twenty boys and 20 girls in the urban sample had mothers who were employed on a full-time basis outside of the home for one year or more. The remaining 20 boys and 20 girls had mothers who were not employed.

The Sex Stereotype Measure II (SSM II) was translated into Korean and used to assess subjects' awareness of sex-trait stereotypes. Results revealed that eight-year-old Korean children were aware of the sex-trait stereotypes found in the SSM II. Their scores were comparable to the mean sex-trait stereotype scores of similar aged children in the United States, England, and Ireland. In addition, urban children were significantly more aware of the sex-trait stereotypes than rural

children. No significant difference was found between the awareness of sex-trait stereotypes among children whose mothers were employed and those whose mothers were not employed. Children were significantly more aware of the male- than the female-trait stereotypes. Furthermore, while boys were significantly more aware of the male- than female-trait stereotypes, there was no significant difference between girls' awareness of these sex-trait stereotypes. Findings were discussed on the basis of previous theory and research.

The Sociocultural Environment, Maternal Employment Status
and Korean Children's Awareness of
Sex-Trait Stereotypes

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Sex role learning is an important aspect of children's personality development. During the process of socialization, children acquire an awareness of sex role stereotypes in the context of a culture. It is generally recognized that children in the early school years acquire an appreciable amount of knowledge of the culturally defined sex-trait stereotypes. Sex-trait stereotypes refer to the psychological characteristics which are differentially ascribed to men and women (Williams, Daws, Best, Tilquin, Wesley, & Bjerke, 1979). Family researchers have hypothesized that the sociocultural and familial environment influence children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of the rural-urban environment and maternal employment status on eight-year-old Korean children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes.

Normative Data

Research with children two to three years of age indicates that they are aware of the sex role stereotypes within a culture. These children are capable of discriminating between various objects, toys, and activities culturally associated with the sexes (Schell & Silber,

1968; Thompson, 1975). Objects related to sports, machines, aggression, speed, and power roles are regarded as masculine, while objects associated with the kitchen and home, babies, personal attractiveness, and fantasy roles are regarded as feminine (Kagan, 1964).

Children at three years of age prefer and adopt these objects and activities for their sexes (Biller & Borstelmann, 1967; Edelbrock & Sugawara, 1978; Hartup & Zook, 1960; Sugawara, O'Neill, & Edelbrock, 1976). This favoring of objects and activities associated with the sexes has been used as an indication of children's sex role identification or orientation (Biller & Borstelmann, 1967).

More recently, however, researchers have not only focused their attention upon understanding children's abilities to discriminate, prefer, adopt, or identify with objects and activities associated with the sexes, but have also centered upon studying selected psychological characteristics associated with these sex role stereotypes (Best, Williams, Cloud, Davis, Robertson, Edwards, Giles, & Fowles, 1977; Williams, Bennett, & Best, 1975). Known as sex-trait stereotypes, these traits represent a constellation of psychological characteristics believed to be more descriptive of one sex than the other (Williams et al., 1979).

Despite historical and geographical differences, and the present egalitarian movement, research findings with young adults continue to show that there are pervasive sex-trait stereotypes in Western cultures (Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1972; Williams et al., 1979). Females are generally characterized as dependent, sensitive, affectionate, and sociable, while males are characterized as

aggressive, ambitious, rational, and independent (Goodenough, 1957; Kagan, 1964; Whiting & Edwards, 1973).

Two research studies conducted by Williams et al. (1975) and Best et al. (1977) have provided us with information regarding children's developmental knowledge of sex-trait stereotypes. Best et al. (1977) administered the Sex Stereotype Measure II (SSM II) to five- and eight-year-old children in the United States, England, and Ireland, and to 11-year-olds in the United States. Knowledge of sex-trait stereotypes was found to develop in a linear fashion between the ages of five and 11. There was a more marked progression in the learning of sex-trait stereotypes between the ages of five and eight. At age five, American children demonstrated an appreciable knowledge of the sex-trait stereotypes. However, their knowledge included only a few of the more salient sex-stereotypic characteristics. By age 11, children had acquired all but a few of the more subtle characteristics. For example, at age five, children were aware that women were supposed to be gentle, and affectionate, and that men were supposed to be strong, aggressive, and dominant. By age eight, the children had learned that females were considered weak, emotional, appreciative, excitable, soft-hearted, sophisticated, meek, and submissive, and that males were considered disorderly, cruel, coarse, adventurous, independent, ambitious, loud, and boastful. By age 11, the children had learned that females were expected to be talkative, rattlebrained, and complaining, while males were expected to be confident, steady, and jolly. The learning of certain aspects of the male and female stereotypes continues into the adolescent years.

While the learning of sex-trait stereotypes occurs linearly, American children at all age levels, were found to know more of the male-trait stereotypes than the female-trait stereotypes. This asymmetrical development of the knowledge of male- and female-trait stereotypes among children has been explained on the basis that attributes and functions stereotypically assigned to the male traits are frequently more highly valued and clearly defined (Flerx, Fidler, & Rogers, 1976; Hartley, Hardesty, & Gorfein, 1962; Broverman et al., 1972; Mckee & Sherriffs, 1957; Spencer, 1967). On the other hand, Williams et al. (1975) have suggested another plausible explanation. They indicate that a large proportion of the male-trait stereotypes have obvious behavioral references in comparison to the female-trait stereotypes. Therefore, female-trait stereotypes are relatively harder to learn than male-trait stereotypes.

Furthermore, there is also evidence of differences between boys and girls in the learning of sex-trait stereotypes. Boys show a greater awareness of the male- than the female-trait stereotypes, while there is no significant difference in girls' awareness of these sex-trait stereotypes. Several investigators have also found that boys are more sex-typed and less flexible in their role committment than girls (Lynn, 1959; Minuchin, 1965). The explanation of this disparity has been attributed to the differential socialization pressures placed on boys and girls in learning sex appropriate behavior (Sugawara, 1971). Boys are discouraged from engaging in activities identified with the female role, while girls are allowed more freedom to experiment with both male and female roles.

Sociocultural Environment: The Rural-Urban Contrast

The rural-urban contrast has long been favored by social scientists as a variable in explaining attitudinal and behavioral variations among individuals. Generally, the rural area has been considered as the repository of traditional modes of behavior and attitudinal structure (Schnaiberg, 1971).

Rural-urban differences in behavior and attitude have been explained in terms of industrialization. Increasing industrialization brings with it increasing urbanization. Improved technology releases people from farm labor and industrial expansion attracts them to concentrated population centers around new sources of work. The variety of population types in cities, their concentration at "critical masses," and their intermingling foster invention and the propagation of invention (Fischer, 1978). Living in a city means exposure to a variety of ways of doing things. The force of tradition is weakened due to the gradual loss of support for homogeneity of experiences (Hartley, 1970). Cities are where "modernizing agents" are located (Sjoberg, 1965).

However, there has been a continuing debate among social scientists concerning the importance of the rural-urban distinction in modern societies. This debate can be classified into three distinct viewpoints. One viewpoint indicates that there are differences between rural and urban societies which cannot be completely explained on the basis of individual characteristics such as age and education (Fischer, 1978). According to Fischer (1978), persistent rural-urban differences do exist. These cultural differences persist because they are continually generated anew by some intrinsic feature of urbanism. It is

generally accepted that innovations tend disproportionately to diffuse from urban centers to the hinterlands. This diffusion takes time. During that time, new forms, some perhaps in direct contradiction to prior ones emerge in and diffuse from the urban centers. This is a continuing process. There are always new opinions, beliefs, and behaviors spreading from the urban centers to the rural areas in the wake of what went on before.

A second viewpoint regarding the rural-urban issue is that differences in beliefs and behavior between rural and urban areas are nil or soon to be nil (Sjoberg, 1964). Theories of industrialization, post-industrial society, and mass society have posited that the influence of the rural environment on values has significantly declined or nearly disappeared (England, Gibbons, & Johnson, 1979).

Finally, Glenn and Hill (1977) proposed a third, intermediate, viewpoint about the importance of the rural-urban distinction in understanding behavior and attitudes. They indicate that rural-urban differences are more than negligible, and there is little reason to believe that these differences are diminishing or will soon diminish. However, they also indicate that these differences should not be exaggerated, since the predictive utility of the rural-urban variable is modest at best.

In spite of the continuing debate concerning the importance of the rural-urban contrast, research findings in the United States indicate that differences are present and worth studying, although they are diminishing. However, it should be indicated that the continuing debate on the rural-urban distinction has been based primarily on information

from advanced urban-industrial societies. An argument in favor of the rural-urban distinction can be made with even greater force when considering "developing" nations (Schmore, 1966). Since the diffusion of innovations from urban centers to their hinterlands is slow in developing countries, more salient differences in value and behavior between rural and urban areas in these countries would be expected.

In recent years, considerable discussion has occurred about the changing patterns of sex role behavior. Due to the egalitarian movement, and the increasing ambiguity of sex role models within the United States (Hartley, 1970; Sears, Rau, & Alpert, 1965), social scientists have assumed that the traditional distinction between males and females is changing.

Children are influenced by their respective sociocultural environments (Coller & Ritchie, 1978). During the course of early socialization they rapidly acquire knowledge of the sex-trait stereotypes prevalent within their subcultures (Mischel, 1970). This socialization process is likely to include the internalization of sex role standards by children in their respective sociocultural environments (Parsons & Bales, 1955). Since rural areas are assumed to be the repository of traditional modes of behavior, conventional attitudes and sex role standards would be more characteristics of children from rural than urban areas (Minuchin, 1965). Light (1970) in her study indicated that rural girls accepted the conventional ethical standards while urban girls were more receptive to the new morality. No research was found directly comparing the development of sex role concepts among children from rural and urban areas.

Maternal Employment Status

The increase in maternal employment over the years has led to continuing research on its differential effects upon children's personality development. A recent review of research indicated that maternal employment is less likely to lead to the adoption of traditional sex role stereotypes among children (Etaugh, 1974; Hoffman, 1974; Howell, 1973; Wallston, 1973).

Parents play a major role in influencing children's concepts of what is appropriate sex role behavior. They do this, in part, by acting as models whom children emulate (Mussen, 1969; Spencer, 1967). Maternal employment appears to be central in the role differentiation between parents which occurs within the home (Broverman et al., 1972). Children's observations of this role differentiation may have an impact on their perception of sex roles (Hartley, 1970; Hoffman, 1974; Mischel, 1970).

Several studies are available which show changes in role differentiation between parents due to maternal employment (Broverman et al., 1972; Hoffman, 1974; Vogel, Broverman, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1970). In a home situation where the father is employed outside of the home, and the mother remains in the home as a full-time homemaker, the role of both parents appear to be sex-stereotyped and clearly polarized for the child. However, in the home situation where both parents are employed, the roles of both parents seem to merge, and are less clearly differentiated for the child. In these latter homes the roles of parents appear to be more similar, since mothers participate less in household tasks, and fathers participate more in them.

Furthermore, in addition to an increase in the father's participation in household tasks, the power and amount of democratic decision-making of the mother increases as a result of maternal employment. The phenomenon of maternal employment, therefore, may provide children with more egalitarian sex role models to emulate. Thus, children in homes where the mother is employed may develop less stereotypic sex role concepts than children in homes where the mother is not employed. Vogel et al. (1970) found this to be true in their research. College students whose mothers were employed were less stereotypic in their sex role perceptions than college students whose mothers were not employed.

Although maternal employment as a variable is generally associated with less traditional sex role stereotypes among children, researchers have speculated that it may have a differential effect upon boys and girls. According to Hoffman (1963, 1974), maternal employment may affect daughters' sex role concepts more than sons'. Since maternal employment more clearly defines the mother's role change than the father's, its effects upon the daughter may be more pronounced. For daughters, maternal employment is much more direct, since it contributes to a concept of the female role which includes less restriction and a wide range of activities. For sons, maternal employment is less direct, since it depends upon how the mothers' employment affects the fathers' role. Douvan (1963) proposed a similar explanation in describing the effects of maternal employment on adolescent boys. She indicated that for boys the model provided by fathers would be the key to their development, while their mothers' activity and employment would be a comparatively minor factor.

Presently, no research was found providing direct empirical support for the differential effects hypothesis of maternal employment. However, due to the speculation that maternal employment may have a more pronounced effect upon daughters' rather than sons' sex role concepts, research in this area has primarily centered upon daughters rather than sons. Hartley (1961) indicated that daughters of working mothers were more likely to see women as less restricted to their homes than daughters of non-working mothers. In addition, daughters of working mothers perceived adult men and women as sharing more in the household activities than did daughters of non-working mothers. With young children, Miller (1975) found kindergarten daughters of working mothers to perceive sex roles in general to be less traditional than daughters of non-working mothers. Similar results were found by Marantz and Mansfield (1977). In a study of 98 girls, five to 11 years of age, they found that daughters of working mothers were less sex-stereotypic in their behaviors than daughters of non-working mothers. Maternal employment appeared to maximally influence girls' sex-stereotypic behaviors during the ages of seven to eight. The sex-stereotypic behaviors of girls in both groups, however, relaxed with increasing age.

Summary

A review of literature regarding the development of sex-trait stereotypes among children indicated that by eight years of age, children are quite aware of these stereotypes. Such awareness develops in a linear fashion between the ages of five and 11, with more marked development occurring at ages five to eight. In addition, studies have

revealed that children are more aware of the male-trait stereotypes than the female-trait stereotypes. Furthermore, young boys show a greater awareness of the male- than the female-trait stereotypes, while there is no significant difference in girls' awareness of these sex-trait stereotypes.

In spite of the continuing debate concerning the importance of the rural-urban distinction in modern societies, rural-urban differences in value and behavior patterns do exist. Rural areas are known to be the repository of more traditional modes of behavior and attitudes. While no research has been found comparing the sex role stereotypes of children from rural and urban areas, since sex role stereotypes reflect general cultural values, it is expected that children in rural areas would show a greater awareness of the sex-trait stereotypes than children from urban areas.

Finally, the variable of maternal employment has been shown to be related to less traditional sex role stereotypes among children. It has been speculated that the impact of this variable on daughters' sex role concepts are more pronounced than on sons', due to the mothers' direct modeling consequences for their daughters. While research with daughters are present, research with sons could not be found.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the awareness of sex-trait stereotypes among eight-year-old Korean children. More specifically, this study attempted to test whether assumptions regarding children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes derived from Western

cultures can be applied to a Korean culture in the following areas:

- (1) rural-urban differences, (2) maternal employment status differences,
- (3) sex differences, and (4) type (male vs. female) of sex-trait differences.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects for this study consisted of 120 third-grade children from both rural and urban areas in Korea. Their ages ranged from 86 to 112 months ($M = 102$). There was no significant difference between the ages of subjects in the rural and urban sample. All subjects came from intact families, and were enrolled in two primary schools within their place of residence. Only average IQ scores of all third-grade children within each school were made available to the researcher. These average IQ scores were determined by a Korean Test of Intelligence developed by the Korean Institute for Research in the Behavioral Science. The average IQ score of the rural children for all third-graders was 103, while for the urban children it was 108.

The rural sample included 20 boys and 20 girls from the Damyang-Dong Primary School at Damyang-Eup, Korea. Damyang-Eup is a small town in the southwestern region of Korea with a population of approximately 15,000 people. It is about 230 miles away from the capital city of Seoul, and is lagging somewhat behind the urban areas in modernization, with poorer educational and social facilities. The rural sample consisted primarily of individuals from farm families. On the basis of the Chung, Palmore, Lee, and Lee's (1972) Index of Social Class, these families were classified as coming from the upper-lower and lower-middle classes.

The urban sample included children from the Bokwang Primary School

in Seoul, Korea. Seoul is the capital city of Korea with a population of eight million people. The school in Seoul from which the urban sample came was in a residential area within the city. Using Chung et al.'s (1972) Index of Social Class, the families of subjects from this urban area were classified as coming from the lower-middle and upper-middle classes. Twenty boys and 20 girls in the urban sample came from families in which mothers were employed outside of the home on a full-time basis. These mothers had been employed for more than a year (\underline{M} = 2 years, 9 months; \underline{R} = 1 to 11 years). A majority of occupations of these mothers included being a teacher, pharmacist, nurse, and owner of a retail store. The remaining 20 boys and 20 girls in the urban sample came from families in which the mothers were not employed.

Instrument

The Sex Stereotype Measure II (SSM II: Williams et al., 1977) was used to assess the subjects' awareness of sex-trait stereotypes. This measure consists of 32 descriptions of psychological characteristics known as sex-trait stereotypes. Sixteen of these descriptions are assumed to be typically characteristic of males, while the remaining 16 are assumed to be typically characteristic of females.

A sample of 110 male and female American college students were used to identify these sex-trait stereotypes. More than 80% of these students identified each of the sex-trait descriptions as typical of males or females (Williams et al., 1977).

The SSM II has been standardized for use with five-, eight-, and 11-year-old American children (Williams et al., 1977). Normative data

regarding these children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes were previously discussed in the "Introduction and Review of Literature" section of this thesis. The correlation coefficient for stereotyped responses across all 32 items was $r = .76$.

The SSM II has also been used in cross-cultural research with children from the United States, England, and Ireland (Best et al., 1977). Product-moment correlation coefficients calculated to describe the relationship between the sex-trait stereotypes of eight-year-old children in these countries were as follows: 1) between American and English children, $r = .93$; 2) between American and Irish children, $r = .87$; and 3) between English and Irish children, $r = .89$. These coefficients reflect substantial agreement among eight-year-old children in their awareness of sex-trait stereotypes in these countries. However, the SSM II has not been used with eight-year-old Korean children.

Prior to selecting the SSM II for use in this study, the measure had to be translated into the Korean language. Four Korean graduate students, well-versed in both English and Korean, contributed their expertise in this translation. Upon completion of the translation, a pilot study was conducted with the instrument using a sample of 25 boys and 25 girls in Korea. On the basis of the pilot study, only minor modifications in administration procedures were needed. Test-retest reliability coefficients of $r = .70$ for boys, and $r = .69$ for girls, with a two week interval between testings, were obtained for the Korean version of the SSM II.

In administering the SSM II to groups of children, each of the 32 sex-trait descriptions found in individual children's test booklets was

read aloud by the teacher as the children followed along. Each sex-trait description was presented one at a time, accompanied by male and female silhouette figures. Children were asked to associate each of the sex-trait descriptions with either the male or female silhouette figure. A point of one is given if the child associates a female-trait description with the female silhouette figure. Since there are 16 female-trait descriptions in the SSM II, a female-trait stereotype score ranging from zero to 16 can be obtained. The male-trait stereotype score is obtained in a similar fashion. Only, in this case, a point of one is given if the child associates a male-trait description with the male silhouette figure. Since there are 16 male-trait descriptions in the SSM II, a male-trait stereotype score ranging from zero to 16 can also be obtained by the children. To obtain a total sex-trait stereotype score for the SSM II, the children's female- and male-trait stereotype scores are added together, creating a range of possible scores from zero to 32.

Procedures

Group presentation procedures specified for the SSM II were used to administer the test to the subjects. Subjects were tested in their respective classrooms by their own teachers. All classroom teachers were females. The SSM II took approximately 25 minutes to administer.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

To fulfill the purpose of this study, the investigator first explored whether eight-year-old Korean children were aware of the sex-trait stereotypes derived from studies with children of similar ages in selected Western cultures (United States, England, and Ireland: Best et al., 1977). The mean total sex-trait stereotype scores of eight-year-old children in these Western cultures were compared with the mean total sex-trait stereotype score of eight-year-old Korean children in this sample. In addition, according to Williams et al. (1977), based on the binomial distribution, a total sex-trait stereotype score of 23 or above would occur by chance about one percent of the time in a group of children who had no knowledge of sex-trait stereotypes. These children were said to be responding at random to the 32 items found in the SSM II. This approach was also used to determine whether the Korean children in this sample were aware of the sex-trait stereotypes.

Aside from exploring whether eight-year-old Korean children were aware of the sex-trait stereotypes, the following hypotheses were tested:

There will be no significant differences between the awareness of sex-trait stereotypes among eight-year-old Korean children with respect to the variables of the:

- (1) rural-urban contrast (Hypothesis I).
- (2) maternal employment status (Hypothesis II).
- (3) sex of child (Hypothesis III).

(4) type (male vs. female) of sex-trait (Hypothesis IV).

A 3 x 2 x 2 (sociocultural x sex of child x type of sex-trait) split-plot analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses in this study. The sociocultural variable included information on both the rural-urban and maternal employment status of the subjects. The split-plot ANOVA was used in data analysis because it estimated the main and interaction effects of the sociocultural and sex of child variables on two (male and female) types of sex-traits conjointly (total sex-trait stereotype score), and then separately (male vs. female sex-trait stereotype scores).

In the split-plot ANOVA design, the sociocultural and sex of child variables are treated as a factorial set of treatments (whole plot). The two types of sex-traits (split-plot) represent two measures on each of the subjects in the whole plot.

The F-values from the whole plot analyses are used for testing statistical significances of the main effects of the sociocultural and sex of child variables, as well as their interaction with the two types of sex-traits conjointly. For example, a significant F-value for the main effect of the sociocultural variable would indicate that children from different sociocultural groups were significantly different in their total sex-trait stereotype scores.

The F-values from the split-plot analyses are used for testing statistical significances of difference between the two types of sex-traits, as well as the interactions of these two types of sex-traits with other experimental treatments. For example, a significant sex of child x type of sex-trait interaction would indicate that boys and girls

show a different pattern of scores on the two types of sex-trait stereotype scores.

To decipher the effects of the rural-urban and maternal employment status variables separately, two orthogonal contrasts were used. These contrasts made possible the comparison of two factor level means by decomposition of the treatment sum of squares into individual degree of freedom components.

Awareness of Sex-Trait Stereotypes

The mean sex-trait stereotype score of subjects in this study is presented in Table 1. The overall mean total sex-trait stereotype score for the 120, eight-year-old Korean children in this sample is 24.13. This is comparable to the mean total sex-trait stereotype scores found by Best et al. (1977) for children of similar ages in selected Western cultures (United States, England, and Ireland). The mean total sex-trait stereotype scores of children in the Western cultures were: United States, 24.49; England, 22.81; Ireland, 21.55.

In addition, 94 out of 120 subjects in this study (78%) obtained a total sex-trait stereotype score of 23 or above on the SSM II. This is considerably greater than the one percent that was predicted to occur by chance in a group of children who had no knowledge of the sex-trait stereotypes, as calculated by Williams et al. (1977). This finding indicates that a large majority of the eight-year-old Korean children in this study are aware of the sex-trait stereotypes found in the SSM II.

Table 1
 Summary of the Mean Male- (M), Female- (F), and Total
 Sex-Trait Stereotype Scores of the Subjects

	Rural			Urban						All Subjects		
	M score	F score	Total score	Employed Mother			Non-Employed Mother			M score	F score	Total score
				M score	F score	Total score	M score	F score	Total score			
Boys	12.45	10.75	23.20	13.35	11.60	24.95	13.25	11.60	24.85	13.02	11.32	24.33
Girls	11.50	11.00	22.50	12.45	12.35	24.80	12.35	12.10	24.45	12.10	11.82	23.92
All Subjects	11.98	10.88	22.85	12.90	11.98	24.88	12.80	11.85	24.65	12.56	11.57	24.13

Hypotheses

A summary of the 3 x 2 x 2 (sociocultural x sex of child x type of sex-trait) split-plot ANOVA applied to the sex-trait stereotype scores of subjects is found in Table 2. The mean sex-trait stereotype scores associated with this analysis were previously presented in Table 1.

Hypotheses I and II. Results related to Hypothesis I (rural-urban contrast) and Hypothesis II (maternal employment status) indicate that there is a significant main effect for the sociocultural variable on the subjects' total sex-trait stereotype scores, $F = 10.25$, $p < .001$. Orthogonal contrast used to decipher the effects of the rural-urban and maternal employment status variables reveal a significant effect for the rural-urban variable, $F = 20.29$, $p < .001$, but not for the maternal employment variable. As shown in Table 1, urban children have significantly higher total sex-trait stereotype scores ($M = 24.76$) than rural children ($M = 22.85$). This finding indicates that while eight-year-old Korean urban children are significantly more aware of the sex-trait stereotypes than eight-year-old Korean rural children, urban children whose mothers are employed are not significantly more aware of the sex-trait stereotypes than children whose mothers are not employed. No significant interaction effect between the sociocultural (rural-urban and maternal employment status) and the sex of child variables was found.

Hypotheses III and IV. Results related to Hypothesis III (sex of child) and Hypothesis IV (type of sex-trait) indicate that while there is no significant main effect for the sex of child variable on the subjects' total sex-trait stereotype scores, there is a significant main

effect for the type of sex-trait variable, $F = 37.89$, $p < .001$, and a significant interaction effect between the type of sex-trait and sex of child variables, $F = 19.33$, $p < .001$, on subjects' sex-trait stereotype scores. As shown in Table 1, subjects have significantly higher male-trait stereotype ($M = 12.56$) than female-trait stereotype ($M = 11.57$) scores. However, as Table 1 and Figure 1 also indicate, while boys have significantly higher male-trait stereotype ($M = 13.02$) than female-trait stereotype ($M = 11.32$) scores, $t = 7.25$, $p < .001$, $df = 59$, there is no significant difference between girls' knowledge of male- ($M = 12.10$) and female- ($M = 11.82$) trait stereotype scores. These findings indicate that while eight-year-old Korean children are significantly more aware of the male-trait stereotypes than female-trait stereotypes, this is more characteristic of boys than girls. There is no significant difference between girls' awareness of the male- and female-trait stereotypes. No significant interaction effects between the socio-cultural and the type of sex-trait variables, as well as between the sociocultural, the sex of child and the type of sex-trait variables were found.

Table 2
 Summary of the Split-Plot ANOVA Applied to the
 Sex-Trait Stereotype Scores of Subjects

Source of Variation	df	MS	F
<u>Whole Plot</u>			
Sociocultural	2	24.63	10.25 **
Rural vs. Urban	1	48.76	20.29 **
Maternal Employment	1	.51	.21
Sex of Child	1	2.61	1.08
Sociocultural x Sex of Child	2	.38	.16
Error (a)	114	2.41	
<u>Split-Plot</u>			
Type of Sex-Trait	1	59.00	37.89 **
Sociocultural x Type of Sex-Trait	2	.18	.12
Sex of Child x Type of Sex-Trait	1	30.10	19.33 **
Sociocultural x Sex of Child x Type of Sex-Trait	2	.26	.16
Error (b)	114	1.56	

** $p < .001$

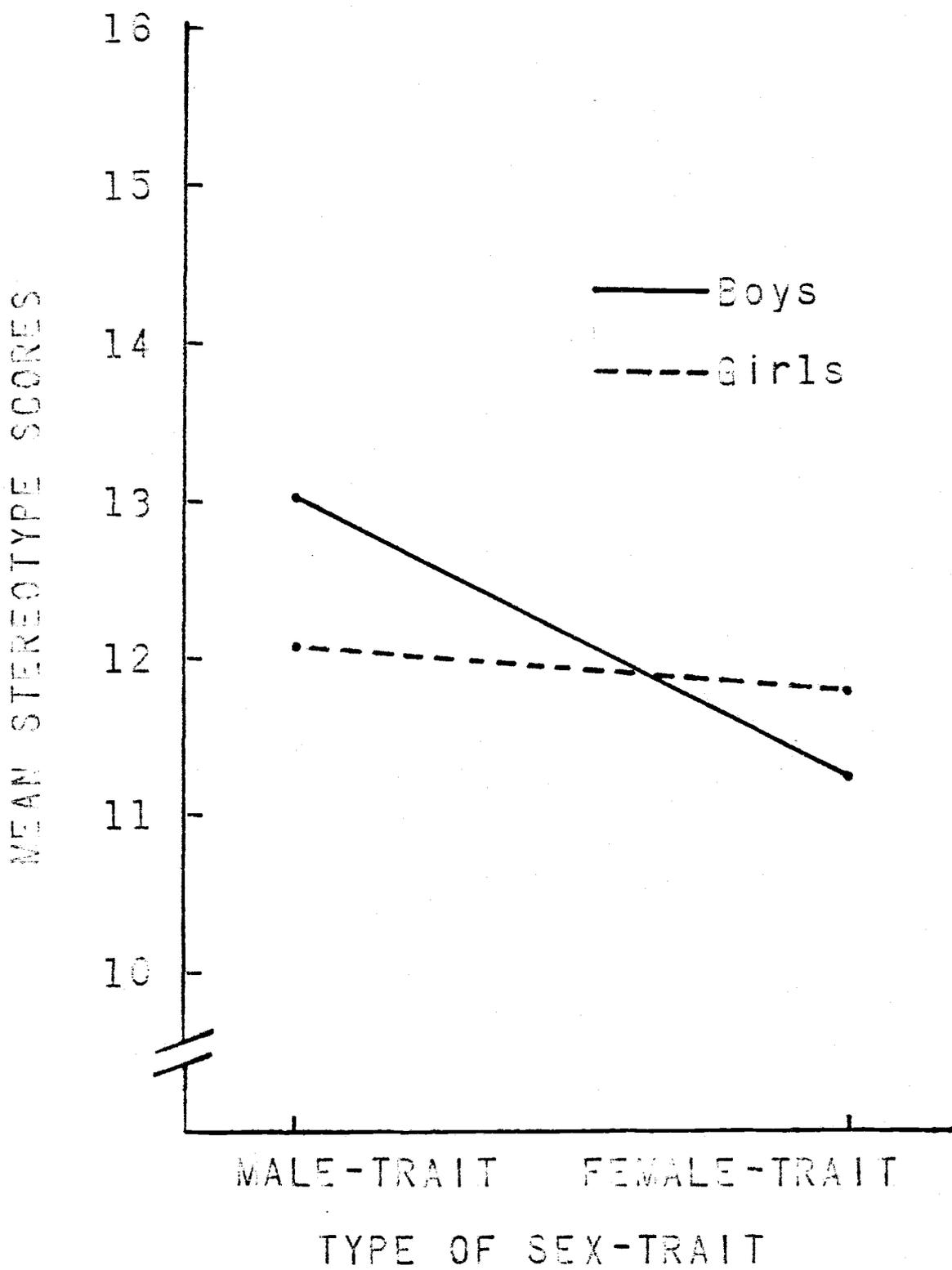


Figure 1. Mean Male- and Female-Trait Stereotype Scores of Boys and Girls.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Discussion of the results obtained in this study on eight-year-old Korean children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes is presented in the order that they were reported in the "Results" section of this thesis. The order of presentation occurs as follows: 1) Awareness of Sex-Trait Stereotypes, 2) Rural-Urban Differences, 3) Maternal Employment Status Differences, and 4) Sex of Child and Type of Sex-Trait Differences.

Awareness of Sex-Trait Stereotypes

Results of the present study revealed that the eight-year-old Korean children were aware of the sex-trait stereotypes derived from studies with children of similar ages in selected Western cultures (e.g., United States, England, and Ireland: Best et al., 1977). The mean sex-trait stereotype score of eight-year-old Korean children was comparable to the mean sex-trait stereotype scores of eight-year-old children from Western cultures. While some variability between the sex-trait stereotype scores of subjects within these cultures did exist, possibly due to cultural differences, these differences were not large (e.g., \bar{R} = 21.55 to 24.49).

Furthermore, 78% of the eight-year-old Korean children obtained a total sex-trait stereotype score of 23 or above. Based on Williams et al.'s (1977) calculation, this is considerably greater than the one percent that was predicted to occur by chance in a group of children who had no knowledge of the sex-trait stereotypes. This finding, therefore,

indicates that a large majority of the eight-year-old Korean children were aware of the sex-trait stereotypes. As indicated by Broverman et al. (1972), despite historical and geographical differences, and the present egalitarian movement, pervasive sex-trait stereotypes among children still exist.

Rural-Urban Differences

In addition to investigating whether eight-year-old Korean children were aware of the sex-trait stereotypes derived from selected Western cultures, the present study also sought to examine the impact of the rural and urban environments on children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes. Results obtained revealed that urban children in this sample were significantly more aware of the sex-trait stereotypes than rural children. This finding is contrary to what was expected on the basis of previous theory and research. Since sex role stereotypes reflect general cultural values, and the rural area has been considered to be the repository of traditional modes of behavior and attitudes (Schnaiberg, 1971), it was expected that rural children would be more aware of the sex-trait stereotypes than urban children. However, the opposite finding was obtained in this study.

In order to understand this unexpected result, further exploratory analyses were undertaken to identify the specific sex-trait stereotypes on which the rural and urban children differed. These analyses revealed that approximately 9 or more urban than rural children considered characteristics such as being talkative, complaining, and affectionate as more descriptive of females than males, and considered character-

istics such as jolly and boastful as more descriptive of males than females. These characteristics taken together represent outward, expressive behaviors, which may be more representative of individuals from urban than rural areas. Butler (1976) in describing the work of Swedner (1960) who summarized studies focused on characteristics of rural and urban individuals indicated that urban individuals are more socially outgoing than rural individuals. However, further research is necessary to provide empirical support for this proposition.

Aside from the explanation presented above, alternative explanations could be considered as plausible in discerning why urban children were found to be significantly more aware of the sex-trait stereotypes than rural children. It should be noted, however, that these additional explanations, while plausible, are conjectural, therefore need to be further investigated.

First, contrary to previous theory and research, roles associated with men and women in urban areas may be more clear-cut than in rural areas. Rural women are used to hard work involving physical labor and strength. They more often involve themselves in carrying out a variety of family functions, sharing their skills in the tasks, responsibilities, and power roles of rural and farm life (Hacker, 1978). Daintiness in dress and manner, as well as the use of cosmetics and a variety of apparel accessories are inappropriate for rural women. These latter characteristics are more typical of women from urban areas. Therefore, in such a circumstance, sex-role stereotypes may be less clear-cut, if not more masculine, for rural children than for urban children.

Furthermore, in urban areas, children are exposed to mass media presentations such as television to a greater degree than in rural areas. In these television programs, exposure to numerous traditional sex role models are common. Recent research has indicated exposure to traditional sex role models in television and movies does lead children to develop more stereotypic attitudes toward the sexes (Davidson, Yasuna, & Tower, 1979; Flerx et al., 1976; Freuh & McGhee, 1975; Mischel, 1970).

In addition to explanations associated with variables found within the rural and urban environments, explanations emerging from the limitations of this study could also be pointed to. One of these limitations involves the absence of a measure of children's intellectual abilities in this sample. While the mean IQ score was available for all third-graders in both the rural and urban samples, individual IQ scores for all subjects in each of these samples were not available. As presented in the "Subjects" section of this thesis, rural children had a slightly lower mean IQ score than urban children. Moreover, it was also noted that the educational facilities in the rural areas were lagging somewhat behind the urban areas. According to cognitive-developmental theory (Kohlberg, 1966; Kohlberg & Zigler, 1967), children's cognitive abilities are reflected in their learning of sex role concepts. Previous research has indicated that the IQ scores of children are positively related to the learning of sex role stereotypes (Kohlberg, 1966; Kohlberg & Zigler, 1967; Williams et al., 1977). On the basis of this theory, therefore, it was not unusual to find urban children to be significantly more aware of the sex-trait stereotypes than rural children.

Maternal Employment Status Differences

Another proposition selected for investigation in this study focused upon the impact of maternal employment on Korean children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes. On the basis of previous theory and research (Gold & Andres, 1978; Hoffman, 1963, 1974; Marantz & Mansfield, 1977; Miller, 1975), it was expected that children of employed mothers would be less aware of the sex-trait stereotypes than children of non-employed mothers. In addition, it was expected that the impact of mothers' employment in reducing children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes would be more pronounced on daughters than on sons.

Results obtained indicated that there was no significant difference between the awareness of sex-trait stereotypes among children of employed and non-employed mothers. Furthermore, the impact of mothers' employment was not more pronounced on daughters' awareness of sex-trait stereotypes than on sons'. These findings, therefore, were contrary to what was expected on the basis of previous theory and research.

A number of explanations, though conjectural, can be offered for these discrepant findings. First, a recent study showed that while mothers who are employed do take on roles outside of the home, their stereotypic roles as mothers within the home do not markedly change (Walker, 1970). In addition to her role as an employed worker, her role within the home as a mother continues to exist, with little or no help from the father. Hoffman (1974) contended that the strain of the employed mother created by her dual role as worker and mother, makes her

feel guilty about not being able to fulfill both roles well, thus leads her to try to compensate for this by overdoing her mother role. In such a situation, instead of providing an egalitarian role model for her children to emulate, the employed mother continues to display traditional sex role behaviors within the home. Under such circumstances, the mother's employment may have no impact on reducing children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes.

In addition to the above explanation, an alternative explanation for the present findings may be due to the types of occupations in which the mothers were employed. Employed mothers are often involved in occupations such as being a store clerk, teacher, or nurse; similar to what some of the mothers in this study did. Analysis of these occupations indicate that they are traditionally female occupations. As such, therefore, employed mothers by virtue of their occupations may enhance rather than reduce children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes.

Finally, in the Korean culture, an employed mother is likely to seek a female support helper within the home to take over aspects of the mother's role while she is at work. Due to close kinship ties, this support helper is often the family's grandmother. Within such a situation, the traditional sex role model in the home is maintained, thus the mother's employment may have no impact on reducing children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes.

Sex of Child and Type of Sex-Trait Differences

The final two propositions explored in this study involved an investigation of the impact of the child's sex and the type of sex-trait

on Korean children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes. Findings revealed that children were significantly more aware of the male- than female-trait stereotypes. In addition, boys were significantly more aware of the male- than female-trait stereotypes, while there was no significant difference between girls' awareness of these sex-trait stereotypes. These findings are consistent with previous theory and research in this area. According to the sociocultural explanation (Flerx et al., 1976; Hartley et al., 1962; Spencer, 1967), children are more aware of the male- than female-trait stereotypes because the male-trait stereotypes are more highly valued and clearly defined than the female-trait stereotypes. This may be particularly true of individuals within the Korean culture, where the society appears to be more male-oriented. On the other hand, cognitive theorists (Williams et al., 1975) indicate that since a large proportion of the male-trait stereotypes have obvious behavioral references in comparison to the female-trait stereotypes, they are easier to learn.

Social learning theory (Lansky, 1967; Sugawara, 1971) has been used to explain why boys show a greater awareness of the male- than female-trait stereotypes, while there is no difference between girls' awareness of these sex-trait stereotypes. More social pressures are placed on boys than on girls in learning sex appropriate behavior. Boys are discouraged from engaging in activities associated with the female role, while girls are allowed more freedom to experiment with both male and female roles.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

As a result of this study, a number of limitations were encountered, which suggested problems that need to be addressed in future research. Several of these limitations and suggestions are summarized following.

One major limitation encountered in this study focused on the use of the SSM II to assess Korean children's awareness of sex-trait stereotypes. Although all efforts were made to translate the SSM II from English into Korean as accurately as possible, in some cases equivalent meanings for certain words were most difficult to find. In addition, several important traits attributed to men and women in the Korean culture were not included in the SSM II, since they were not important traits in the Western cultures. Future studies might focus on developing a Korean SSM II in a similar manner that the SSM II was developed for use in Western cultures. Cross-cultural studies can then be conducted using these versions of the test for comparison purposes.

Another major limitation encountered in this study focused on a number of variables left uncontrolled that may be important in explaining some of the intriguing results obtained. With respect to the rural-urban variable, more information about the characteristics of the rural and urban communities from which the subjects came would be worthwhile. The roles that men and women assume in these communities, and the value-orientations they uphold may prove helpful in explaining their impact on children's learning of sex role concepts.

Associated with the variable of maternal employment status, more detailed descriptions of the mothers' and fathers' roles within the

family, the strain that the dual role of worker and mother creates on families, and the type of support help the family receives when the mother is employed would be important. In addition, a clear description of the types of occupation in which the mothers were employed may prove significant in interpreting the results obtained.

In reference to other family variables, characteristics such as family size, sibling composition, and family kinship networks would provide valuable information for understanding children's learning of sex-role concepts.

Regarding variables associated with experiences outside of the home, such as interaction with peers, a variety of educational experiences, exposure to television and other mass media have all proven significant in influencing children's sex-role learning. In addition, characteristics associated with the child's age and intellectual level should be controlled or studied. The present study limited itself to eight-year-old children. For a more realistic picture of the development of children's sex-role concepts, children at different ages might be studied to identify developmental trends. Furthermore, the present study had no individual measurements of children's intellectual abilities. Since children's cognitive abilities are reflected in their learning of sex role concepts, an assessment of their intellectual level would be most important.

Finally, two additional limitations associated with this study were the relatively small sample size used, and the narrowing of the sample to include children from families predominantly of the middle-class, although some subjects came from the upper-lower class. Use of

a larger sample size in future studies, including a still wider range of subjects from a variety of socioeconomic classes would allow for greater generalizability of findings, and detailed analysis of data related to the variable of social class.

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