Boys' and Girls' Perceptions of Assertive and Aggressive Behavior

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Boys' and Girls' Perceptions of Assertive and Aggressive Behavior

Teri Stasiewicz

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Abstract

It has been established that young children are able to distinguish aggressive behaviors from prosocial behaviors such as helping. This study examines the degree to which 4- through 6-year-olds are able to distinguish assertive behaviors from aggressive behaviors, and how such behaviors are perceived as a function of gender. Participants viewed videotaped puppet shows depicting prosocial, neutral, assertive, instrumental aggressive, and hostile aggressive acts. Half of the children were randomly assigned to view vignettes involving female puppets; the other half viewed vignettes involving male puppets. Participants were then asked to determine if the actions were okay or not okay. Boys and girls were found to be able to distinguish assertive from aggressive behaviors. Results indicated that the participant’s gender and the gender of the puppets do not influence young children’s perceptions of assertion and aggression.
Boys' and Girls' Perceptions of Assertive and Aggressive Behaviors

Do children understand what it means to be assertive? It is not clear whether young children are able to distinguish assertive behaviors from aggressive behaviors. For example, how do children view other children who run ahead during class to line up first for recess (an assertive behavior) compared to one child pushing another during class (an aggressive behavior). It has yet to be determined at what age young children begin making the distinction between assertiveness and aggressiveness.

Researchers have defined assertiveness in multiple ways depending on the context. Costa and McCrae (1992), labeling it “dominance,” considered it a subtrait of extraversion within the Big Five Theory. The Big Five Theory consists of five factors that form a model for personality: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Engler, 1999). Assertiveness has also been defined as “agency,” a personality trait which is a combination of dominance, independence, leadership, and control. Regardless of exact definitions, assertiveness has been linked with both masculinity and high-status (Bern, 1974; Eagly, 1983).

Behaving assertively can have meaningful effects on the quality of life for those engaging in assertive behaviors. When examining employee interactions, adult employees who interact assertively with other employees tend to be treated more fairly by both the other employees and their appraisers (Korsgaard, Roberson, & Rymph, 1998). Adults who act assertively are treated more fairly as a result of their behavior, which positively affects their quality of life.

Hollandsworth and Cooley (1978) studied adults’ responses to assertive and unassertive audio-taped conflict situations. Four scenarios, in which the target responded either assertively or aggressively, were presented to participants. For example, a participant might see a video in which a person is being confronted by a co-worker after picking her up late for work every day
for a week. Some participants viewed the target in the video responding assertively, whereas other participants witnessed an aggressive response. The participants then had to try and resolve the conflict. It was predicted that participants were more likely to resolve the conflict in a way that complied with assertive targets and that participants would be less angry with assertive versus aggressive targets. Using a self-report measure and having judges rate the participant responses for each scenario, they found assertive responses to elicit greater compliance and provoke less anger than the aggressive responses.

Geller and Hobfoll (1993) examined adults' willingness to offer social support to assertive men and women. Participants viewed videotaped vignettes and read passages depicting workplace interactions between assertive males and females. One scenario depicted an employee seeking information about job advancement from a supervisor with a list of his/her accomplishments. A second scenario had a small group meeting in an office where one junior employee made comments affirming the manager's viewpoint, and the other junior employee presented a contradictory viewpoint and tried to persuade the manager to agree with him/her. The participants were then asked to evaluate and rate the degree to which they would work with or support the target. It was predicted that males would rate assertive females more negatively than assertive males and be less likely to offer them support. According to this study, each sex preferred their own sex, with men rating male targets more positively and women rating female targets more positively. Adult males and females perceive assertiveness differently as a function of gender, rating their own gender more favorably.

These findings demonstrate that adults are able to distinguish between assertive and aggressive behaviors and react differently to them. Assertive responses are more likely to elicit compliance compared to aggressive ones, and are also less likely to provoke anger. It also
appears that the gender of the target and gender of the perceiver both affect how adults view assertiveness.

It has long been established that sex differences in behavior exist among adults and children (Bem, 1974). Research has found that certain behavioral characteristics are associated with males and females and sex-role stereotypes exist in children as young as 5 years of age (Bem, 1974; Harris & Satter, 1981). The Bem Sex-Role Inventory has defined features typical of males and females. Masculine traits have been defined as "aggressive," "assertive," "defends own beliefs," and "willing to take a stand." Feminine traits have been defined as "gentle," "childlike," "soft spoken," and "shy."

One reason that assertiveness is more often associated with men may have to do with their status in Western society. As personality theorists have shown, high-status people have been found to have more agency and are more assertive compared to low-status people (Eagly, 1983). Men have traditionally had higher salaries and more education compared to women, both qualities linked to high-status (Twenge, 2001). It might be assumed that because women are traditionally of lower status than men, that they are less assertive.

Not only do male and female adults behave differently in terms of assertive behaviors, they also perceive such behaviors differently. A female may be more likely to be viewed as aggressive when she is engaging in an assertive behavior because it is less socially acceptable and common for females to engage in assertive behaviors (Bem, 1974). This stereotype may result in women receiving less fair treatment, more negative evaluations, less compliance, and greater more anger from others, even when engaging in the same behaviors as men.

Females exhibiting assertive behaviors have been rated more negatively by both genders compared to males engaging in the same behaviors. Kelly, Kern, Kirkley, and Patterson (1980)
studied adults' judgments of assertive and unassertive behaviors, as well as sex differences in their judgments. Participants viewed videotapes of males and females behaving assertively in four interactions similar to those used in assertiveness training. Results showed that assertive adults are described as higher in competence, ability, and achievement compared to unassertive adults. Also, both genders rated female targets in the scenarios lower than males in likeability, attractiveness, ability, and competence. Whereas overall, assertive adults are viewed as more able and competent than unassertive adults, assertive women are viewed as less able and competent compared to assertive men.

Little empirical research has focused on assertive behaviors among children. The majority of studies with young children have looked at their engagement in assertive behaviors, rather than their perceptions and judgments of them. At what ages do such stereotyped perceptions of gender and assertiveness develop and how are they maintained? Whereas we know that adults perceive distinctions between assertive and aggressive behaviors, and also perceive differences between genders in these behaviors, there is a lack of research in this area among children.

In general, boys and girls develop awareness of gender stereotypes very early. For example, Harris and Satter (1981) examined sex-role stereotypes among kindergarten children using the Pre-School Sex Stereotype Measure, which measures knowledge of both psychological and vocational stereotypes. They found that both genders knew gender stereotypes, although girls knew the female stereotype better than did boys.

With regard to behavior, some research does suggest that boys and girls engage in assertive behaviors differently, starting at an early age (Charlesworth & Lafreniere, 1983). When examining 4- to 6-year-old boys and girls, it was found that girls are less assertive with
boys than with girls when asked to obtain a limited resource (a movie viewer that requires help to operate it). The gender of both the participant and the target can play a large role in determining children's assertive behaviors.

Benenson and Aikins-Ford (1998) examined 4-to-6-year-old girls' assertiveness in the presence of boys. They found that girls' assertive behavior depends largely on the social context. Girls tended to behave more assertively in the presence of boys when part of a group of girls, and less assertively when alone or with one other girl.

Assertive behaviors have been studied in inner-city 4-to 6-year-old children (Wall & Holden, 1994). When observing boys' and girls' interactions with their mothers, it was found that boys tend to behave more assertively than girls. Examples of such assertive behaviors include making requests for behavior, expressing thoughts/feelings in a nonhostile manner, and appropriate questioning.

In terms of children's perceptions of assertiveness, one study found that 4th-6th graders could distinguish between highly aggressive, assertive, and submissive actions (Deluty, 1983). Definitions of aggression, assertiveness, and submissiveness were determined by the participants using self-report questionnaires and peer-report questionnaires. He found a large difference between children's judgments of assertive and aggressive behaviors, but a smaller difference between judgments of assertive and submissive behaviors. This established that older children are able to make distinctions between these types of behaviors, although Deluty did not test younger children.

In comparison to assertive behaviors and perceptions of assertiveness, there is a considerable amount of empirical research focusing on children and aggression. This may be
due to the fact aggressive behaviors are more obvious and easier to observe among young children and are viewed as clearly problematic.

Aggression and aggressive behaviors among children have been defined as the intention to injure others or make them feel bad (Barrett, 1979). Aggressive behaviors can include hitting, pushing, insulting, criticizing with the intent to hurt others' feelings, accusations, and threats. With such a broad definition, aggression can be separated into physical and verbal aggression. Physical aggression can be categorized into either instrumental or hostile aggression. Instrumental aggression has been defined as when a child’s primary goal is to gain or preserve a resource and the secondary goal is injuring another child, whereas in hostile aggression the child’s primary goal is to injure another child (Hartup, 1974).

It is well known that there are sex differences in aggression among young children (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1980). Boys as young as age 3 engage in more physical aggression, such as hitting, and more verbal aggression than girls. Boys’ aggression is also displayed more frequently when they are in the presence of other boys. Hudley (1993) studied teacher and peer perceptions of aggression, acceptance, and rejection among children in grades 3 through 8. Using questionnaires, she found that both teachers and peers reported higher levels of aggression in boys than in girls.

Barrett (1979) examined sex differences in aggression among 5- through 9-year-olds at a summer day camp. Each child was observed in a naturalistic setting, over a span of six weeks. He found that boys are more aggressive towards their peers than girls are, although the levels are considerably higher when a boy is interacting with another boy as opposed to a girl. There are significant differences in levels of young children’s aggression as a function of gender, with boys behaving more aggressively than girls, and even more so when the target is another boy.
Some research in the area of aggression and young children has focused on differences between relational and overt aggression (both behaviors and perceptions of). Relational aggression is defined as behaviors that focus on damaging or manipulating peer relationships, such as excluding a peer from a social group as a form of retaliation. Overt aggression is defined as behaviors such as physical fighting or verbal threats; more direct behaviors intended to hurt or harm others. Crick, Casas, and Mosher (1997) examined preschoolers’ relational and overt aggression and found that girls are more relationally aggressive and less overtly aggressive than boys.

A study examining 9- through 12-year-olds focused on whether participants viewed relationally manipulative behaviors as “aggressive” (Crick, Bigbee, & Howes, 1996). Aggression was defined as feelings of anger and intent to hurt or harm others. Two studies evaluated children’s perceptions of relationally manipulative behaviors using open-ended questions and peer assessments. They found that relational aggression was the most commonly cited “angry and harmful” behavior for girls and physical aggression (or overt aggression) was the most commonly cited for boys. This study was pivotal in that it was the first to show that children view relational aggression as being “aggressive.” Both overt and relational aggression are viewed as harmful and angry by children.

Another study examined preschooler’s judgments about and perceptions of relational and overt aggression (Goldstein, Tisak, & Boxer, 2002). Preschoolers read two stories; one depicting relational aggression and one depicting overt aggression. They were then interviewed to assess their judgments and perceptions of the aggressive behaviors. Girls were found to rate relational aggression as more wrong than boys did, regardless of the gender of the story-character.
Connor, Serbin, and Ender (1978) found that 4, 6, and 8 year olds are able to make distinctions between aggressive, assertive, and passive behaviors. They used three different scenarios; interaction between a child and teacher, a child and friend, and a child and cousin, all ending in either a verbal aggressive response, an assertive response, or a passive response by the child. They found that children responded differently to aggressive, assertive, and passive behaviors depending on the gender of the character performing the behavior. Both genders of participants judged verbal aggression as less desirable for females, and assertive behavior was more desirable for males. Also, passive behavior was more desirable for female than for male characters.

The distinction between assertiveness and aggression is an important one. Research has shown that a person perceived as aggressive suffers more detrimental effects compared to that same person being perceived as assertive, such as provoking more anger in others and less compliance (Hollandsworth & Cooley, 1978). The existing literature has shown that adults perceive assertive and aggressive behaviors differently based on gender, as well as associate assertiveness with high-status (typically a male trait), making females less likely to be viewed as assertive. Also, children consider relational aggression to be “aggressive,” and girls tend to engage in more relationally aggressive behaviors than boys, even at a young age. Girls also view relational aggression as more wrong than boys do.

Although there has been a great deal of research on gender differences in aggressive behavior, fewer studies have examined the effects of gender on perceptions of assertive behaviors, and even fewer focus on young children. We know that 4th-6th graders can distinguish assertive behaviors from aggressive behaviors, but it is not known if younger children are able to
do the same (Deluty, 1983). It has not been established whether young children are able to
distinguish between assertive and aggressive behaviors.

The present study examines whether young children (ages 4-6) are able to distinguish
between assertive and aggressive behaviors, and the extent to which boys and girls rate these
behaviors differently. It is predicted that children between ages 4 and 6 will be able to
distinguish between assertive and aggressive behaviors. Also, if a girl engages in assertive
behaviors, we predict she will be perceived as more aggressive compared to a boy engaging in
the same behaviors. However, female participants will rate assertive behaviors as more
aggressive, whereas male participants will rate them as less aggressive. Girls will also rate
hostile aggression more negatively than boys.

Method

Participants

A total of 38 kindergarteners participated, 19 boys ($M = 74$ months), and 19 girls ($M = 73$
months). Participants were recruited from a before and after school care classroom, a daycare
classroom, and two Montessori classrooms. All of the schools were in the Midwest and all
participants were from upper middle class backgrounds. The sample was comprised of 28
Caucasian, 4 Indian, 2 Asian, 2 African-American, and 2 Hispanic children.

Materials

Ten videotaped puppet shows were created, varying in the behaviors of the puppets, and
the puppets' gender. Four puppets (2 boys, 2 girls) were made from felt and dressed gender
appropriately (e.g., girls wore dresses and had long hair, and boys wore pants and had short hair).
Five scenarios were videotaped; prosocial, neutral, assertive, instrumental aggressive, and hostile
aggressive (see Appendix). The prosocial scenario consisted of one puppet sharing his or her
raisins with another puppet. The neutral scenario consisted of two puppets painting a picture next to one another. The assertive scenario consisted of one puppet announcing that he or she is going first in a board game. The instrumental aggression scenario consisted of one puppet taking playdough from another puppet. The hostile aggression scenario consisted of one puppet knocking over another puppet's blocktower. Each vignette was videotaped twice; once with male puppets and once with female puppets, to create ten videotapes total. All interactions were same-sex and were approximately 15 seconds long. Half of the participants viewed all 5 of the boy puppet videos and half viewed all 5 of the girl puppet videos.

The question packets consisted of five sheets corresponding to the videotaped puppet shows. Each sheet contained one question, asking the participant to determine if the action was "okay" or "not okay," and the degree to which it was or was not, e.g., "Was it okay for Peter to take his turn or was it not okay?" Using a Likert-type scale consisting of four smiley-faces of varying degrees (labeled "really not okay," "kinda not okay," "kinda okay," and "really okay"), participants were asked to choose a face. The order of "okay" and "not okay" was balanced across vignettes and the sheets were placed in random order, corresponding to the order in which the videos were shown to a participant.

Procedure

Each participant was randomly assigned to an experimental condition (boy puppets or girl puppets), with the constraint that equal numbers of males and female participants were represented within each condition. The experimenter introduced herself to the participant individually in the classroom and then walked him or her to a separate room in the facility. The experimenter gave the same instructions to all participants, telling them what would take place and informing them they were free to stop participating at any time. During the experimental
trials, the experimenter showed five videos, in random order. Each video was played two times each to ensure the participant was paying attention. After each video, the participant was asked the question from the packet that corresponded to the correct video. The experimenter first asked the “okay” or “not okay” question, to which the participant responded “yes” or “no.” The experimenter then asked the degree to which the action depicted in the video was “okay” or “not okay” using the smiley-faces. This procedure was repeated for each of the five videos. After the experiment, the participants were thanked for their participation and given a sticker.

Results

Children’s responses were coded according to a 4-point scale. “Really not okay” was coded as 1, “kinda not okay” was coded as 2, “kinda okay” was coded as 3, and “really okay” was coded as 4. Higher scores indicate more positive ratings, with lower scores indicating more negative evaluations of the puppets’ behavior.

A 2 (puppet gender) X 2 (participant gender) X 5 (type of video) ANOVA, with repeated-measures on the last factor was conducted. We found, as expected, that children’s views of the videos differed significantly depending on the type of video $F(4, 136) = 71.83, p<.05, \eta^2=.68$. Four out of five pairwise comparisons showed that participants made distinctions between the videos. There was no significant difference between the prosocial and neutral videos. There were significant differences between between every other video: prosocial and assertive, prosocial and instrumental aggressive, prosocial and hostile aggressive, neutral and assertive, neutral and instrumental aggressive, neutral and hostile aggressive, assertive and instrumental aggressive, assertive and hostile aggressive, and instrumental aggressive and hostile aggressive, Tukey HSD, $p<.05$ (see Table 1).
If the gender of the puppet and/or the gender of the participant made a difference in how the videos were rated, we would expect to see significant two-way interactions between each of these factors and the type of video. Specifically, we expected that participants would rate the assertive videos more negatively when female puppets were shown, and when females were giving the ratings. Neither interaction was significant, Video x Puppet Gender, $F(4, 136) = .89, \text{ ns, } \eta^2 = .03$, Video x Participant Gender, $F(4, 136) = .27, \text{ ns, } \eta^2 = .01$.

Three participants responded negatively to the prosocial measure. After removing their data, there was still no difference between the prosocial and neutral videos, although there was no longer a significant difference between the instrumental aggressive ($M = 1.43, SD = .15$) and hostile aggressive ($M = 1.17, SD = .10$) videos.

Analysis of variance assumes that the dependent measure is on an interval scale, whereas the measurement scale is nominal in this study. There is a greater qualitative difference between a rating of 2 (kinda okay) and a rating of 3 (kinda not okay) than there is between a rating of 1 (really okay) and a rating of 2 (kinda okay). To account for these differences, we also conducted Chi-square tests. Chi-square goodness of fit tests revealed no significant differences in children’s ratings for either puppet gender or participant gender.

Although we predicted that girls would rate assertive behaviors more negatively than boys, there was no significant difference between male and female participants in how they rated the assertive videos, $\chi^2 (3, n=38) = 3.91, \text{ ns}$. Further, there was no significant difference between male and female participants in how they rated instrumental aggression videos, $\chi^2 (3, n=38) = .80, \text{ ns}$, or hostile aggression videos, $\chi^2 (3, n=38) = 1.22, \text{ ns}$, (see Table 2).

We also expected that if a girl puppet engages in assertive behaviors, she would be perceived as more aggressive compared to a boy puppet engaging in the same behaviors. Chi-
square goodness of fit tests revealed no significant differences between responses for boy and
girl puppets for the assertive, $\chi^2 (3, n=38) = 2.21, ns$, instrumental aggressive, $\chi^2 (3, n=38) = 4.78,
s$, and hostile aggressive videos, $\chi^2 (3, n=38) = 4.78, ns$, (see Table 3).

Discussion

The results supported our first hypothesis that young children would be able to
distinguish between assertive and aggressive behaviors. Our findings showed that young boys
and girls are able to make a distinction between assertive and neutral behaviors, assertive and
instrumental aggressive behaviors, and also between assertive and hostile aggressive behaviors.
This is evidence that young children are able to make this distinction, just as adults do (Bern,

We also hypothesized that young children would perceive girls engaging in assertive
behaviors as more aggressive compared to a boy engaging in the same behaviors. This
hypothesis was not supported. Children’s responses to the assertive video and aggressive video
did not vary as a function of the puppets’ gender. We also found no support for the hypothesis
that female participants would rate assertive behaviors as more aggressive, male participants
would rate them as less aggressive, and females would rate hostile aggression more negatively
than males.

The results of this study indicate that 4-to 6-year-olds are not yet judging aggressive and
assertive behaviors differently as a function of their own gender or the gender of the assertive
target. We know both adults and children as young as 4th grade judge aggressive, assertive, and
passive behaviors differently based on the gender of the character (Deluty, 1983; Connor, et.al.,
1978). Somewhere between kindergarten and 4th grade children begin to judge these behaviors
Boys' and Girls' Perceptions

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Behavior therapists often utilize assertiveness training in working with children (Phillips & Groves, 1979). Therapists developing assertiveness training models for young children should take into account the development of their perceptions about assertiveness. The results of this study suggest that young children are able to make this distinction, although they do not yet perceive sex differences in assertive and aggressive behaviors. This is important to note when training young children. Therapists often utilize various contexts to teach assertiveness, such as using sports with boys. Behavior therapists need to be aware of their actions when training boys and girls in different contexts. Boys and girls may not yet understand their gender roles and perhaps using different contexts for different genders affects the quality of assertiveness training they receive.

The participants in the present study were all enrolled in various school settings. Perhaps children are able to make the distinction between assertion and aggression because of their socialization in the classroom. A focus of many preschool and kindergarten classrooms is developing socially appropriate skills for interacting with others. It is possible that young children are immersed in the skills of assessing and interpreting others' behaviors on a daily basis. This heightened awareness could explain their ability to make the assertive-aggressive distinction. By the time children have reached kindergarten, they are usually knowledgeable of what behaviors are acceptable in the classroom. This could explain why the children in this study were able to distinguish between assertive and aggressive behaviors depicted in a classroom setting. Future research could examine these behaviors in other settings outside of the classroom to see if our findings are generalizable.
The children in this study did not perceive gender differences when evaluating prosocial, neutral, assertive, and aggressive behaviors. Young children may not yet perceive differences as 4th graders do for various reasons (Deluty, 1983; Connor, et. al., 1978). Although boys and girls understand their own gender roles by age 4-6, and they engage in assertive and aggressive behaviors differently at that age, they may not yet apply their knowledge of gender stereotypes when judging assertive behavior in others.

The young children in our study did not perceive assertiveness differently according to the puppets’ gender. One possible limitation to the present study was the use of puppets rather than real children to demonstrate the target behaviors. Children may have perceived such differences if the characters were real children, where the gender may appear more obvious to them. To control for this in the future, a manipulation check could be used to see if participants did believe they were viewing girl puppets or boy puppets.

Also, it may be difficult for children to focus on understanding and judging the behaviors of the characters, while taking the gender of the character into account at the same time. After the first trial in this study, the children may have understood the task to be judging the behavior of the puppets, and so they did not focus on the gender of the puppets. In the future, it may be helpful to conduct a practice trial prior to collecting data. This would provide participants with a chance to familiarize themselves with the task.

In conclusion, the results of this study indicate that young children are able to distinguish between assertive and aggressive behavior. Also, 4- to 6-year-olds do not take gender into consideration when judging these behaviors. They also do not make different judgments based on their own gender.
References


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Appendix

Prosocial

Set: classroom during snacktime, raisins

Characters: Matt & Kevin (Katie & Amy)

Narrator: After recess it is snack time, so Matt and Kevin are getting ready to eat their snacks.

M: Oh no, my mom forgot to pack me raisins for my snack. (becomes upset)

K: Oh, here, you can have some of my raisins. (gives Matt some of his snack)

Neutral-parallel play

Set: classroom, painting supplies

Characters: Ryan & Christopher (Julie & Victoria)

Narrator: Ryan and Christopher are playing after lunch.

R: Hey, what are you doing?

C: I’m painting a picture. (as he paints)

R: I’m gonna do one too. (gets a paintbrush)

Assertive

Set: classroom

Characters: Peter & Danny (Sarah & Megan)

Narrator: During playtime, Peter and Danny have decided to play candyland.

P: I’m gonna take my turn first. (picks up game piece)

D: (no response)

Instrumental Aggressive-Contact with toy

Set: classroom, playdough on table

Characters: Mike & Bobby (Jenny & Sally)
Narrator: At Mike and Bobby’s school, the teacher has just put out some new playdough.

M: Oh boy, I’m gonna make a snowman with this playdough. (reaches for the playdough)

B: No, I’m gonna use this playdough. (quickly grabs playdough before Mike reaches it).

Hostile Aggressive—Physical contact

Set: classroom, blocks

Characters: Johnny & David (Susie & Kristen)

Narrator: At school today Johnny is working on a block tower. David comes over to see what he’s doing.

J: This is gonna be the coolest tower ever! (tower of building blocks)

D: Your tower is yucky. I don’t like your tower. (then kicks or knocks over tower).
Footnote

1. Three participants viewed the prosocial video (two puppets sharing raisins) as "really not okay," stating either that sharing food transmits germs or the puppets did ask for permission to share.
Table 1

Mean Acceptability Ratings (and Standard Deviations) as a Function of Type of Behavior Observed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Behavior</th>
<th>Prosocial</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Assertive</th>
<th>Instrumental Aggressive</th>
<th>Hostile Aggressive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>$M$</strong></td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$SD$</strong></td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

*Number of Children in Each Response Category as a Function of Participant’s Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Gender</th>
<th>Really not okay</th>
<th>Kinda not okay</th>
<th>Kinda okay</th>
<th>Really okay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prosocial**

| Male                | 2               | 4              | 13         |
| Female              | 0               | 2              | 14         |

**Neutral**

| Male                | 6               | 3              | 3          | 7          |
| Female              | 3               | 5              | 7          | 4          |

**Assertive**

| Male                | 15              | 2              | 1          | 1          |
| Female              | 13              | 4              | 1          | 1          |

**Instrumental Aggressive**

| Male                | 17              | 1              | 0          | 1          |
| Female              | 17              | 2              | 0          | 0          |

**Hostile Aggressive**
Table 3

*Number of Children in Each Response Category as a Function of Puppet's Gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Puppet Gender</th>
<th>Really not okay</th>
<th>Kinda not okay</th>
<th>Kinda okay</th>
<th>Really okay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prosocial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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Author Note

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