Parental reinforcement

**Identification**

The people who which a child identifies with is known as a role model and they model their behaviour according to this.

**Modelling**

Combination of factors within the model and needs of individual affect whether they will imitate. E.g. if a boy was to be accepted by members of a peer group who enjoy playing football, he will begin to play. This will increase chances of him being accepted and their acceptance is his reinforcement.

**Perry and Bussey**

Investigate children preferences of same-sex models. M – children same 4 males and 4 female models chose between two items, females all choosing the same and vice versa – asked which they liked best. R – preferred the item that had been chosen by same sex.

**Factors which are likely to increase the chances of modelling**

- ** Appropriateness** – of model. Bandura found whilst males would imitate aggressiveness show by males they wouldn’t if model was female.
- **Relevance** – of behaviour. Therefore, if model has similar characteristics e.g. gender then more likely.
- **Similarity** – more similar so more likely
- **Status** – high status e.g. like older brothers
- **Attractiveness** – glamorous, successful, heroic are more
- **Reward** – if model is seen to be rewarded.

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**Fagot**

Parents encouraged girls to dress up and play with dolls and rewarded the for signs of dependency and domesticity. Compared to boys, who were rewarded for playing with trucks and active play.

- Girls criticised for climbing
- Boys discouraged from playing with dolls

However, Maccoby said that there was remarkable uniformity in the socialisation of the two sexes.

**Lytton**

Metta analysis of parent treatment and reinforcement.

Parents differently reinforced (encouraged and rewarded) behaviour for boys and girls including play actives and toy choice

- Fathers provided more differential reinforcement than mothers
- No evidence of differential treatment of sexes in relation to amount of interaction
- Aggression discouraged in both
- DT more noticeable with younger children
- However, self-report – asking parents so this may result in social desirability bias and may not be valid.
The influence of culture and media on gender roles

Cross cultural research contributes to the nature – nurture debates in establishing origins of gender identity. If behaviour is similar across cultures, then this gives supports for the nature argument whereas if different then supports nurture.

**Cultural differences**

**Mead**
Studied gender roles of different tribal groups of the island of New Guinea

The arapesh were gentle and responsive (similar to western stereotypes of femininity)

The Mundugumor were aggressive and hostile (like western masculinity)

The Tchambuli women were dominant and they organised village life whilst men were passive (opposite of western stereotypes)

This suggests that there may not be a direct biological relationship between sex and gender and that gender roles may be culturally determined.

Cultural is the major socialising agent

**Cultural similarities**

**Buss**
Found consistent patterns in mate preference in 37 countries across all continents

I all cultures women sought men who could offer wealth and resources whilst men looked for youth and attractiveness in partners

**Munroe**
Found that in most societies there is a division of labour organised along gender lines with males being breadwinners and females being nurturers

In societies where strength is not required for occupational roles outside the home then gender roles will be more similar and psychological differences will also be reduced.

1. Most widely reported piece of cultural research
2. Current anthropologists challenge her methodology as lacking scientific rigour
3. only one doing study – observations may be subjective
   Furthermore, already held strong views on power of environment
4. Second hand information so may not be accurate
5. Gewertz – revisited the Tchambuli and concluded that women did not dominate men or vice versa.

**The media**

Provides role models with whom children may identify and want to imitate.
Evidence that media provide very clear gender stereotypes and are ridged – men are independent and ambitious and women are developed and unambitious.

**Farragher** – study of TV adverts, men were shown in professional contexts whereas women were occupying domestic setting.

**Morgan** – found a positive correlation between amount of TV watched and strength of gender stereotypes.

**Harrison** – content analysis, found very few gender stereotypes in programmes but that blatant stereotypes have been replaced with more subtle difference’s

Male still more likely to take the lead roles whereas females take a lead role where an attractive appearance is important.