PRUHP1- Research Project

by Lauren May

The University of St Mark & St John

Gender in the Early Years Classroom: An

exploration of the influence of resources

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BA (Hons) Primary Education

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Statement of Originality

I confirm that I have fully acknowledged all sources of information and help received

and that where such acknowledgement is not made the work is my own.

Signed: Lauren May

Date: 20/04/2020

Acknowledgements

I would like to pay my special regards to the university of St Mark and St John, more specifically the staff from the BA primary education course and the student support staff who have supported me in completing my three years at the university. I would like to show my greatest gratitude and appreciation for my mother, Nigel, nanny and papa for making this possible for me and supporting me over the years to help me achieve my goal. Lastly, I would like to pay special regards to my boyfriend Alex for his part in my journey and being there from the beginning.

Abstract

The overall purpose of this study is to see how the resource choice influences the gender of the child who plays with the activities and engages with them, in an early years setting. The age range of this study is three to four-year old children, with a near equal number of boys and girls. This study uses a theoretical research method which is observations. This was what was felt to be the most sufficient way to come to a conclusion. The general outcome of this study was that there are more non gender specific and conclusive areas than inconclusive. There are gender stereotyped areas but not all areas show a gender divide.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Topic

This research project is based on gender and resources in the environment of an early years setting. This project is going to focus on the resources that a practitioner in the early years setting provides for the children in order to see if there is a link between gender and resources in the early years setting.

1.2 Aim

The objective is to observe the children and practitioner in the setting to identify how, with what and with whom the children chose to play and what resources are provided and made available to the children. This research will abide by the ethical guidelines of the University of St Mark and St Johns. From this information I will be able to see what activities, resources and games are most popular for each gender, identifying if there is a good mix of resources to suit the interests and needs of each gender.

1.3 Importance

I feel that this research project is worth researching and would be useful for further study. This is because, play forms such an integral part of the early years curriculum that the resources chosen to be used are of the upmost importance. If there is a problem in terms of one gender being left short of interest in resources, then practitioners and teachers should become more aware of what they are making available and how well suited the resources are to each child. All children should be able to have support in reaching their potential (Stanger, 2018).

This research is going to be approached by observing the links between what is provided from the practitioner and how the children react to these play resources.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This review of literature includes sections which have been broken down, to analyse the key ideas which are already relevant, based around gender and resources within the early years setting. The literature review focuses on journal articles and books which are of great relevance and are the most up to date on this subject. This literature review is going to give a clear idea of what has already been researched and will give insight to ideas throughout this research project.

The Early years framework (2017) states the importance of imagination, creation, teamwork and communication. This is all possible through the varied types of play. Some play categories include solitary, parallel and co-operative play. Children might play independently, with others or watching and copying others. The National Curriculum (2013) also expected that resources cover more than one area of learning, to make learning more challenging and meaningful.

Oksman (2016:1) Research article states that 'Gendered toys are harming development'. This is believed to be the case due to the rise in manufactured goods which are aimed at either boys or girls and are a certain colour to capture a specific audience, where children feel that they need to play with a certain coloured toy. In addition; Oskman (2016) concluded that there are times children watch each other and it can be very limiting if a child feels they cannot join the other gender. Toys are of importance to children and a mixture of resources will lead to child exploration. This is beneficial for a child's development (Krentz, 2008). Norris (2017) believes that children pick up on gender differences from as young as three to four years old which may begin to influence the choices they make.

2.2 Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotyping is a noted topic in schools and within education. Blower (2017) discusses how traditional gender stereotypes have been challenged within the classroom, in regard to gender equality. These are the ideas based around masculinity and femininity and how boys may choose to play with 'Postman Pat' and how girls are interested in dressing up. Clough and Nutbrown (2009) agrees suggesting, that a strong part of playing is who the child is playing with, and that certain play areas are highly dominated by a specific gender, for example the home corner maybe perceived as a place for girls. Previous research has shown that there is a high level of play for certain children with stereotyped toys meaning that all of the girls have chosen to play with specific toys which have generally been stereotyped to girls (Cherney et al 2003). Paley (2014) originally witnessed stereotyped play within her early years setting. Before her attempts to alter the stereotypes in the classroom, she observed the boys playing as the superheroes and the girls playing in the home corner, with each child with their gender role. This was a recurring theme each year. However, it is important in the early years framework that children play together, getting an inclusive chance within education. This is through teamwork, good communication and learning opportunities (EYFS, 2017).

2.3 Gender equality

Gender equality includes ideas such as 'equal fairness' (Thomas, 2012), anti-discriminatory practice and feminism. In previous history, women were viewed as inferior in comparison to men. This is why the feminist act, came into effect during the 1970's to support equality (Swinth,2018). Charles Darwin (Cited in Whye, 2008) suggested that women are behind in the stages of evolution. For years after Darwin's statement, scientists who were mainly male dominated, believed that this was true and found evidence in supporting this idea (Saini,2018). Saini (2018) also believes

that it is true that men and women are fundamentally different, for example, their bodies and brains work differently (Fine,2005). Nevertheless, as Griffin (2018) states, gender equality should be practiced within education as everyone is equal regardless of gender. Paley (2014) states the differences in her observations, in regard to, behaviour. The boys 'rough play' and noise, compared to the organisation and play roles in the home corner where the girls are playing. Paley tries to discourage the gender divide, and in the setting has the boys calmly drawing houses, this means that the boys are able to extend their creativity, just like the girls who tend to choose creative play and drawing in the room regularly. This is a prime example of promoting gender equality in the classroom. Thomas (2012) also believes that play should be encouraged with resources allowing benefits for boys and girls.

2.4 Culture

The United Kingdom (UK) and the majority of the world see gender equality as important. There are still some cultures who believe that men are more valuable, more dominant and more important than women (Uchem, 2001). This will affect resources through play as some cultures expect the man to be 'masculine' and run the house being strong and important and may not want a boy to be playing with toys, like dolls, which girls tend to enjoy playing with (Nutbrown et al, 2013). Although playing with a range of toys and resources can have a positive effect on development and emotional engagement (Macintyre, 2011) and with settings following the guidelines and expectations, various areas of learning will be included within play 'areas' and resources put out for children. This is why all children should get the chance to play where and with what they choose and all resources should be made to be inclusive as possible.

2.5 Inclusion

Inclusion within education includes the ideas relating to how holistic development is going to be supported for all children regardless of gender and that each child gets an equal opportunity during play and learning opportunities within the setting. Nutbrown (2011) also states that inclusive practice is supporting the holistic development of each child, ensuring that experiences children have are positive ones.

Taylor et al (2016) believe that both genders need to learn that they have choice, they are strong, caring, gentle and powerful. Along with the ideas that if a child's play choices are limited, then they are put into 'categories' and play will not support learning and equality. Nutbrown et al (2013) agree that children should have equal opportunities during play because play supports holistic development and wellbeing. This will introduce the ideas of inclusion as every child will get a chance to benefit through choice.

There has been a known issue in the past regarding inclusive practice, but children should have a feeling of belonging and needs should be met. Rodgers and Rodgers et al (2012:4) state that barriers where there have been inclusive issues should be broken down through participation and a sense of belonging as all children have the same needs. As Tassoni (2003) suggests, this is not always true as some children may need more support than others. Which can create an inclusion issue, with a child receives more support than others. If this is the case, then a teacher needs to ensure that the other children are still getting support if it is needed (Jones,2004).

2.6 Conclusion

Throughout this literature review, there have been four areas which have been discussed, where previous research has been undertaken, these are; gender

stereotypes, gender equality, culture and inclusion. There has been evidence that there is a clear importance in the early years for imagination, creation, teamwork and communication. With regards to the varied types of play which take place. Ideas such as manufactured toys with colours to limit toys to a certain gender can affect the inclusion of all children, as children pick up on their own gender and the differences from a young age.

Gender stereotyping in the setting is where the play areas are dominated by a certain gender. However, inclusion should be encouraged to support each child's learning opportunities. The ideas that men have historically been called superior compared to women is where the ideas of equality have arisen. It is common knowledge that females and males have differences in their bodies. Nevertheless, everyone is equal and should be granted the same opportunities, which is an idea which Paley (2014) places into her practice. Some cultures have beliefs that men should be masculine and need to be strong and powerful which can make a divide through girls and boys interacting in the same activities. Inclusion is the intention that all children are equal in learning and their opportunities and that holistic support should be there for all.

In conclusion, this literature review has given an understanding of the research that has previously been ventured, and the ideas which have evolved around gender in play within an early year setting.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this section, the methodological approach will be explained, with insight on what is believed to be the most effective data collection approach to suitably answer the research question. The methods of data collection which have been used to conduct the research will be explained, along with the equipment and procedures which have been used in order to gain the relevant information. The methodology within research according to Brink (2006) holds an important part as it gives direction to the study in aim to reach a goal.

3.2 Methodological Approach

In order to investigate the research question of gender in the early year's classroom: An exploration of the influence of resources. A qualitative theoretical research method needs to be undertaken. For my study I will be undertaking observations of the resources and collecting selected data in a systematic approach.

Qualitative data is using or has relation to participants and the research therefore has meaning as people make sense of the world (Guest, 2013). Garbich (2012) believes that qualitative data can give understanding to individual behaviours, attitudes and values. These ideas show that this research question involving the resources that are located in the early years classroom and the data collected is classed as qualitative data. Case study is the approach which is being used in this research project and is described "Intensive analysis of a single case within naturalistic context, valuing its particularity, complexity and relationships with the context" (Kershner et al, 2020). This means that a case study uses a holistic approach with a range of methods and perspectives to complete the research.

There are many reasons why observations were chosen as the preferred research method, in comparison to the others which were not found as suitable for conducting the research. The limitations or weaknesses in the approach have been acknowledged, but these were outweighed by the strengths. One limitation would be that there is limited time to produce the research, which is part of the reason observations were more suited to this project. Wilkinson (2000) believes that interview transcripts take time to complete, along with the note taking and recording of the interview, although this might be considered as an ideal way to get responses from the interviewee compared to observations which could be more detached as you watch from the side lines, with no communication. Gill et al (2015) elaborates that observations are used by all every day, especially in educational settings. However; this then allows the researcher the opportunity to go back and re-examine a situation to improve knowledge. This is commonly termed as reflective practice (Jasper, 2003).

Structured observations are more objective as researchers would commonly create questions to ensure said observations have a focus, and it would be easier to categorise outcomes (Schmuck, 2006). However; for this research unstructured interviews led to less bias, as there will not be a pre-determined assumption (Musante et al, 2011).

Questionnaires were not considered for this type of research because they would be better suited to a larger group of participants and leading questions can be challenging (Wilkinson, 2000) The children would also be too young to undertake a questionnaire. This is why observations were chosen for this small research sample, as this would be better with a smaller sample size.

3.3 Data collection

The series of observations in each area in the pre-school room were completed in a nursery in Cornwall, where the children were aged three to four years. A series of eight mornings at the nursery allowed the data to be collected, where observations were based around what the practitioner had put out for the children to play with and any presumed links to gender. Each day, a different area of the pre-school was observed so I could spend some time observing every area. The observations were recorded through note taking, which seemed the most logical approach considering there was no participation as the researcher and the observations were solely completed through detached and unstructured observation. I chose the pre-school room as I was aware that I would be undertaking random sampling, through different children attending on different mornings. The group always had a near enough equal number of males and females in the morning cohorts, where the children's ages only ranged slightly. I was aware that there were limitations with a smaller sample size (Schmuck, 2006), in regard to the whole project. However, the observations through qualitative research, gives a broad perspective of the social setting" (Bloomberg et al, 2015).

3.4 Methods of analysis

The methods of analysis for the qualitative observations, categorising and making sense of note taking were through content analysis which is coding and categorising themes and ideas. Coding is one way of analysing the data which has been collected, and coding for patterns will be used in this research project to see if there are consistencies (Saladana, 2012). Coding qualitative data makes for easier analysis of the themes discovered. Gibbs (2007) states that coding defines the data that will be analysed. Tables were used to note take the observations, in the setting.

Furthermore, tables were also used to code the data, including the main themes which have occurred throughout the collection.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

In terms of validity for this research question, the data collection demonstrates a case study sample. However; the early years setting in question is typical of many across the country. There were limited observations which means that there is less research as the data is only coming from one group, in one setting (Kirk et al, 1986). The observations which took place are coming from one person and their interpretations could possibly be biased, although the tools used tried to introduce objectivity, so that everything that was noted down and key information could be bought forward for analysis. The note taking and coding framework which is going to be used will allow for everything to be noted down and then key information to be brought forwards for analysis.

Chapter 4 Data Analysis and Discussion

This analysis and discussion will be separated into different parts, this is based around the themes which have occurred from the observations and coding framework which was used. **Merriam and Grenier (2019:15)** States data analysis is important, as the themes allow the data to be compared to find "common patterns" from the research. Data coding which creates themes supports a 'meaningful' discussion **(Miles et al 2014:86).** The themes include; the colour of resources, traditional gender scenarios and Play type. Each theme includes parts of importance from the observations and are colour coded to create discussion and analysis. The colour code red has meaning that there was no gender divide/resource/scenario interpreted in that part of the observation. So orange is inconclusive and holds middle ground whilst green is conclusive so shows signs of a gender divide. The themes are colour coded from personal interpretation, with careful analysis aiming to prevent a bias.

The participant school had a range of activities which adjusted from day to day. All children were encouraged to play where they would like to, and with what they would like to. It was clear from the settings planning that they were attempting to ensure an attraction to both genders with regards to allowing personal choice and suiting activities and resources to the needs and likes of the child.

4.1 The colours of resources

In accordance with the table, red was interpreted three times. In the first observation in the home corner, there was no obvious colour which would attract a specific gender. However, the gender neutral colour of the kitchen station, in my observations, did not attract males to play as it was a highly female dominated area. This is common as is known as a traditional female scenario. **Nutbrown et al (2013)**

believes that the home corner is gender dominated, as girls will be more attracted to the role play area. **Paley (2014)** had similar findings with the home corner from her own personal experiences. This could be due to parents having given children different stimulation based on their gender which could be a reason to avoid bullying at the social setting **(Rivers and Barnett, 2013).** This maybe common if girls have a kitchen set up at home as a resource for them to play with.

In the sixth observation, the painting station was observed. There was one more boys than girls in this area, but this was classed as a gender-neutral activity with the resources ranging in colour, from paint to paper. Therefore, this was not seen as gender specific. The significance of this observation is that the area was not based around suiting a certain gender, more at supporting each child's holistic development **(Robins and Callan, 2008).** In a previous study by **Tayler and Price (2016),** there are clear expectations of inclusion in a setting, along with the ideas that children have choice and should be supported to include their general development.

Two results were interpreted as inconclusive. Firstly, in observation one, the baby's clothes ranged in colour and this could be to attract each gender. **Paley (2014)** saw the stereotypes of females in the role play area and describes ways to reduce such gender roles, this could be the aim in this role play area. Regardless of that, no boys came to dress up the dolls despite the practitioner deliberately choosing a variety of colours. This could have been to attract the boys to the area. In the same observation parts were interpreted conclusive. The kettle, toaster, pram and tea pot (with a picture of a princess in a dress) were all a pink colour. This gives the impression that the resources are aimed at females, **Weisgram and Dinella (2018)** State that toys are produced for a certain audience, so this can lead us to believe the resources in the kitchen role play area were created for female suitability **(Rogers and Evans, 2008).** Unlike the baby's clothes, interpreted as inconclusive, the pink

resources made this part of the observation look like there was no input in aiming to attract males. **Fine (2010)** found that subconsciously, decisions will be made with colour, through unconscious choices within education.

The Second inconclusive observation of the outdoor area was from observation 4 where there were two pink scooters and red bikes. The red bikes were interpreted as gender neutral, due to the colour suiting either gender **(Ross, 2011)**. **Bilton (2014)** states the importance of outdoor play and gives ideas for practitioners to make this successful, making play variable to suit the needs of the child.

The outdoor construction area, in observation four, had yellow, blue and green blocks. This was colour coded as conclusive due to the fact that girls played with the Lego but not outside when building resources were only in three colours, and that the colours would be seen to be more attractive to males. Statistics show that males are more likely to become builders and laborers **(Williams, 2015).** This supports the idea that the construction areas are male dominated.

4.2 Traditional gender scenarios/type of resources

Observation two was interpreted with no gender divide. There was a range of fiction and non-fiction books in the book corner along with a wide variety of books capturing the interest of different children. I established that this was an area all enjoyed and would benefit each child's development **(National Reading panel, 2000).** With this is mind, with the idea's children enjoyed reading together through story times, it is clear the resources were not gender specific in this observation. In observation 4 the outdoor area was seen as suitable for all children with a good range of different activities. Although, not all activities may suit certain genders there were options for the children. It has been previously confirmed that children choose stereotyped toys

and spend a long duration using them **(Cherney, 2003).** It was recognised that this could be the case but in regard to this research children were given the choice of many resources instead of gender specific ones for both genders.

The first observation was interpreted as inconclusive this is due to the kitchen role play area being a traditional female scenario **(Paley,2014)** but including a variety of resources within to be of interest to either gender**.** However; included a variety of resources within to be of interest to each gender. **Bonnel (1985)** believes that children are influenced only by attitudes and a child's gender does not influence enthusiasm towards certain activities. This may have been why the area was female dominated but it is verified that every child should have inclusive learning **(UNESCO, 2019).** Upon reflection the balance between having a traditional female role play area and resources to suit each gender this observation was portrayed as inconclusive. This was the same for the dressing up box. Although there were a range of outfits for both genders, the resources are there for the attraction of boys and girls. I concluded that the outfits assigned roles for the children in regard to masculinity and femininity. With dresses for girls and supermen for boys, this would not benefit them in establishing their own individual identities **(Blower, 2017).**

The fifth observation was the construction area with Lego. This was coded as conclusive. Like the role play area being female dominated the construction area was male dominated. As previously suggested males may be more attracted to this area (see colour of resources) the resource was very limited in terms of supporting all children, as they were just building "houses" and "walls". I recognise all children can play with this resource, but the intended audience would be males as building can be classed as masculine (**Griffin, 2018).**

4.3 Play type

The last table is Play type. I Have used all of the main areas which were observed. Firstly, the kitchen role play area, the construction area and the dressing up area were coded as conclusive. The significance of these findings is that these are similar in ways, that they are both aimed for a certain gender and each gender played with the resources in accordance to the belief that they would be more suited to this area. It is already known that certain genders are more typically attracted to certain toys **(Josephidou and Bolshaw, 2020)**. Regarding this research it is proven that the certain beliefs around these ideas have been confirmed during my research. Previous studies have outlined issues with children's resources based on culture and what they play with is an effect on influences of what is believed to be appropriate for them **(Nutbrown, 2013)**. Along with **Blower (2017)** and his belief on the ideas of masculinity and femininity**,** and children choosing activities that their peers play with **(Bensen and Haith, 2010).** In summary, the areas are based around suiting what both genders are suited to, therefore these play types are coded as conclusive as they provided for both genders.

The other three areas which include; the book corner, outdoor area and painting area. These were coded as non-gender specific areas. This is because there were no stereotyped resources and a variety in this area and the areas were not used differently by either gender **(Nutbrown, 2009)**. All children would experience the same learning and enjoyment from these areas, and they would benefit both genders. I established that these activities a practise of gender equality **(Browne, 2004**). Therefore, these areas are significant as there is no influence of gender with these resources.

Chapter 5- Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the general overall outcome of the research shows that there are more non gender specific and conclusive areas than inconclusive. This clearly shows that there is gender stereotyped play in the pre-school. However; not all areas do show a gender divide.

The first recommendation to the pre- school would be to think about reflective practice and how to improve teaching performance, to ensure that practitioners are taking account of the interest of the children. This will involve observing the children at play to identify their interests and incorporating these into all areas of the classroom, to challenging gender stereotypes. An example would be if boys are showing a particular interest in monsters, an invitation to play could be set up to get the children to make the monster breakfast in the role play area. This way the role play area would be more creative and would be given the chance to gain the interest of both genders, instead of being highly dominated by females (**Robin and Callan, 2008**).

A second recommendation would be to consider some of **Paley (2014)** and her views on how to try and transform the pre-school area to make It more gender neutral. Furthermore; considering the construction area and how this is also typically suitable to males could be a starting point, maybe incorporating ideas of team work to encourage each gender to play together. Alternatively, practitioners could watch the girls at play and incorporate this into the construction area. Creating an area that can be of interest to each gender within the area, for example den building. This could also be done inside and out **(Bilton, 2014).**

A third recommendation would be for the practitioners in the nursery to use reflective practice to support their development to ensure that there are positive and strong

dialogues within the classroom and that they are showing efforts to challenging stereotypes. This would be through modelling non gender discriminatory conversation.

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Appendix A Ethics Form

Ethical Approval Form for Student Research

Name of Applicant	Module Code
Name of supervisor / module leader	

Faculty

Title of project

Timeframe of research
Provide a brief timetable of the proposed research, particularly indicating data collection phase(s). Ethical approval is for a limited time period: if the research changes, or extends beyond this period, the applicant should ensure that ethical issues are reconsidered by the Panel.

Purpose of research
Provide a summary of the research, written in terms easily understandable by a non-specialist

Justification for the research
Indicate the contribute to knowledge, policy, practice and/or peoples' lives that the research is anticipated to make

Participants in the research
Provide details of the participants in the research. Where appropriate, this should include specification of the population to be studied and sampling procedures to be used

Recruitment procedures
This should explain the means by which participants in the research will be recruited. If any incentive and/or compensation (financial or other) is to be offered to participants, this should be clearly explained.

Informed consent
Explain the information that will be provided to potential participants, and procedures for gaining consent

Methods

If you answered **NO** to **ALL** questions in Section B such proposals will not normally require ethical review. Advice should be sought in cases of doubt.

If you answered **YES** to **QUESTIONS 1 AND/OR 2** in Section B please proceed to Section C.

If you answered **YES** to **QUESTION 3** you will need to contact the Research and Innovation Office to ensure your research is compliant with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act (1986).

Section C	YES	NO
1. Does the research involve participants who are unable to give informed consent, considered to be vulnerable, or who lack capacity? (e.g. your own students, children, people with learning disabilities)	X	
2. Will the research require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups/individuals to be recruited? (e.g. for access to students at school, or to members of a particular organization)	X	
3. Will the research involve access to records of personal or confidential information concerning identifiable individuals, either living or recently deceased?		X
4. Will the research involve the use of administrative data or secure data? (e.g. student records held by a school or college, medical records)		X
5. Will the deception of participants (including covert observation in non-public places) be necessary at any time?		X
6. Will the research involve discussion of sensitive topics? (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, political behaviour, ethnicity and, potentially, elite interviews)		X
7. Will the research involve sensitive material that might be linked, or interpreted as linked, to terrorism/matters that the PREVENT policy is concerned with?		X
8. Will the research involve members of the public in a research capacity, helping to shape methodology and/or to collect data? (e.g. participatory research)		X
9. Will the research involve visual or vocal methods where participants or other individuals may be identifiable in the data used or generated?		X
10. Will the research involve any drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins and other supplements) being administered to the participants, or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?		X
11. Will blood or tissue samples be obtained from participants (deceased or alive)?		X

Section D
Please indicate the Risk Level for the project by checking the intersecting box

		Research Risk		
		Low	Medium	High
Participant Vulnerability	Low	X		
	Medium			
	High			

Please justify the research risk and group vulnerability indicated above – be sure to discuss what to include here with your supervisor.

The participants are children from a nursery, aged 3 to 4 years old, who will only be observed by the researcher with the teacher present, as such they are at no risk of harm either physical or mental from this research project. The research will use passive observation to identify how, with what, and with whom children choose to play, the resources that the teachers use in the sessions, and, as such, represents a low research risk. The aim of this research Is to see what resources are provided for the children and what the children choose to play with. From this I am then able to see what activities are more popular for each gender and whether there is a mix of resources available to suit each. I will be complying with the settings own policy and procedures and therefore the management at the setting will give approval for observations to take place, being aware that they are able to opt out at by 29TH February 2020, and a consent letter to the setting will state this clearly. The participants including the setting, teachers, children and any others will be kept anonymous throughout the research project.

Signature of applicant	Signature of supervisor / module leader
I declare that I have read the Ethics Policy and will follow the guidelines therein:	*I declare that I have read the completed Ethics Checklist and the research described accords with my understanding of the proposed work.*
Signature: *Lmay.*	Signature *Aciell*
Date: 21/11/2019	Date: 21/11/2019

If the Risk Level for your project is in the shaded box in Section D your research may qualify for **LIGHT TOUCH** review.

If you answered **YES** to **ANY** question in Section C **AND** the Risk Level of your research is **OUTSIDE** the shaded box then your application requires **FULL REVIEW**. If the Risk Level of your research is **INSIDE** the **DIAGONALLY STRIATED** boxes your research also requires scholarly review. If this is the case, you will need to complete the following form:

Appendix B Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby give my consent to allow Lauren May to conduct observations of agreed Early Year's groups and the resources used in order to complete her undergraduate research project, as she explained verbally to me.

I have understood the aim of the research project and the details of the study provided to me.

I understand that I am agreeing for non-intrusive observations to take place and that parental consent has been established in accordance with existing school policy.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw my consent for this study without providing an explanation. I can also request that any observations on a particular child are not used in the results of the study. In both cases, I have until 28th February 2020 to withdraw consent and/or make a request for certain observations not to be used.

I understand that all the observation data and information will be treated in the strictest confidence and that no names or identities will be revealed. All data will be stored securely in a locked cabinet.

Early Year's Manager:

SARA MITCHELL   S. Mitchell   9.00 am 4-2-2020

Printed Name   Signature   Time & Date

Researcher's:

LAUREN MAY   L May   9.00 am 04.02.2020

Printed Name   Signature   Time & Date

Appendix C Observation Forms

Date: 5/2/2020	Location: Pre-School room- Role Play area
Duration: 10 minutes	Other factors:

Notes:

-5 children playing in the role play area (Set up with a house theme including; a kitchen area, utensils, food, prams, babies, baby clothes, table and 2 chairs)

- The kitchen station which included a sink and oven was in a light blue colour with darker spots all over it.

-The kettle and toaster were a bright pink colour, along with the baby's prams.

- There was one boy and one girl baby doll in the area with two prams.

- There was a mixture of clothes in the baby clothes basket, colours including; white, red, pink, blue and green.

-This area was highly dominated by females.

-Pots and pans were blue, black and silver

- Tea pot set was pink and had a picture of a princess on it

- Bowls and cups ranged in colours of orange, green, red and blue

Gender of the children in the area:

Started off with 5 girls

2 girls left

2 boys past and watched for approximately 5-10 seconds and carried on walking past. They then returned and took the play phone which wound the girls up, took it and walked off.

Date: 6/2/2020
Location: Pre-school room

Notes:

-There was a new rule which was introduced, including that the number of children allowed in that area at one time was 4.

-Within the space of 10 minutes 4 girls went into the area and so did one boy.

Date:7/2/2020	Location: Pre-school room- Book area
Duration: all morning 9-12	Other factors:

Notes:

-This area is accessible to all children

-This area was filled with 15 books with a range of fiction, non-fiction and picture books.

-There was a box with blankets and bears which the children can use when in the book corner.

-The display is 'The hungry caterpillar' with pages from the book hanging down from the ceiling by a painted tree on the wall, which has leaves falling around the pages of the book.

-throughout the day there was a mixture of boys and girls in the area, who were looking and reading the books together.

-This is also an area for the children to relax and chill out in.

-7 boys and 5 girls in the area.

-no apparent gender divides

-2 boys and a girl were sharing a book, taking tuns to turn the pages, reading aloud and laughing. This was a child led activity.

Date: 12/2/20	Location: Pre-school room – dressing up box
13/2/20	
Duration:	**Other factors:**
All morning- ongoing	

Notes:

-There is a box full of dressing up clothes

-This included:2x superman, nurse/doctor, spider man, 3x princess dress' (including tiaras), camouflage trousers, top and head band, animal outfits (bear and mice with tail)

-3 boys seemed to be playing together dressing up as Spiderman and superman

-3 girls showed interest in dressing up

-The outfits did not seem to be highly used- in comparison to other areas

-It seemed that the children dressed up and then chose something else to play with (not playing in role of character they were dressed in for a long period of time)

Girls wore:

-princess outfit

-animal outfit

-nurse outfit

-superman outfit

Boys wore:

-superman outfit

-Spiderman outfit

-bear outfit

-camouflage items

Date: 24/2/20	Location: Pre-school outdoor area
Duration: All morning- ongoing	Other factors:

Notes:

Bikes and scooters

-2x red

-2x pink scooters

-3 boys played on the bikes in total and one girl

-2 girls played on the scooters but no boys

Water play

-measuring tools in the water

-boys and girls playing in the water

Wendy house and mud kitchen

-both played in this area

-old pots and pans, with kitchen utensils

-2 boys and 3 girls were playing in this area. 2 boys and 2 girls were engaged in a game together and one boy was playing independently

Slide and climbing frame

-a metal slide which attracted a range of children both boys and girls

Building bricks

-4 boys were playing with the bricks.

-colours included yellow, blue and green in the set

-no girls were in this area

Snack time

- During this time the children were lifting the tablecloth to look at the colour of the tables to decide where to sit. One boy said "I am going to sit on this one because blue is my favourite colour"

Date:25/2/2020	Location: Pre-school room – construction area
Duration: All morning- ongoing	Other factors:

Notes:

-Today there was a box of Lego on the floor(Large vary of colour)

-1 boy and 1 girl were making a house, using the Lego to build walls

-There were 2 other boys and 1 girl who were playing independently

-The two children were playing nicely until another boy came over and took some Lego off of these children, this caused upset but then he decides to go and play outside.

-This area was more male dominated

Date26/2/2020	Location: Pre-school room – Painting in the art area
Duration: All morning- ongoing	Other factors:

Notes:

-Adult "pick which colour paper you would like to use" the options were orange and green

- The colours of paint were blue, white and red. Most children picked one colour and then either painted the whole sheet or just the handprints.

-Out of 5 boys 1 picked orange

-Out of 4 girls 2 picked green.

Appendix D Data Coding

D1 Observation 1:

	Colour
Obs1 – All females The kitchen station which included a sink and oven was in a light blue colour with darker spots all over it.	Blue traditionally associated with boys
kettle and toaster were a bright pink colour, along with the baby's prams	Bright pink traditionally associated with girls
baby clothes basket, colours including; white, red, pink, blue and green.	Mixed colours – non-gender specific
Pots and pans were blue, black and silver	Mixed colours – non-gender specific
Tea pot set was pink and had a picture of a princess on it	Bright pink traditionally associated with girls
5 children [all female] playing in the role play area (Set up with a house theme including; a kitchen area, utensils, food, prams, babies, baby clothes, table and 2 chairs) This area was highly dominated by females.	**Role Play scenario** Traditional female scenario

D2 Observation 2:

	Book corner resources
Obs 2- No apparent gender divide [7 boys and 5 girls] Mixture of books (fiction and non-fiction) Mixture of books which either gender would be interested in Blankets and teddy's that all children would use	No apparent gender divide- boys and girls reading the books, playing and enjoying the area together
	Display in book corner
A book which all children would listen to, about food and animals, involving counting which could be an interest to all	No apparent gender divides

D3 Observation 3:

	Outfits
Obs 3- mixed gender [3 boys and 3 girls] Box of dressing up clothes: Boys wore- superman outfit, Spiderman outfit, bear outfit and some camouflage items Girls wore- princess outfit, animal outfit, nurse outfit and superman outfit	Mixture of outfits which would be traditionally associated with boys and girls Boys did not wear the princess dresses and nurses' outfit when the girls did Girls did not wear the spider man outfit, and camouflage items when the boys did

D4 Observation 4:

Obs 4-outdoor area mix of gender	Snack time: children picking preferred color (one boy picked blue as it is his favorite)
Areas: Two Pink scooters and two red bikes	Resources: Pink- Traditionally associated with girls Red- could be associated with either gender
Measuring tools in water play- both genders involved	Mix of genders
Wendy house and mud kitchen	Mix of genders
Slide and climbing frame	Mix of genders
Building blocks: yellow, blue and green	Colours traditionally more attractive to boys – all boys in this area- traditional male scenario- building

D5 Observation 5:

Obs 5: Construction area	Colours
Lego on the floor accessible to all	Not gender specific
	Traditional male scenario- building
Mixture of gender in this area	Not gender specific

D6 Observation 6:

Obvs 6- painting	
Colours of paint were red, white and blue	Not gender specific
Colours of paper were orange or green	Not gender specific
Colour of paper Boys 4 green 1 orange	Boys preferred green
Girls 2 green 2 orange	Mixture of colours- Non gender specific

Appendix E Themes

Theme	Setting/scenario	Observation
Resource Colours	The kitchen station which included a sink and oven was a light blue colour with darker spots all over it. kettle and toaster were a bright pink colour, along with the baby's prams baby clothes basket, colours including; white, red, pink, blue and green. Pots and pans were blue, black and silver Tea pot set was pink and had a picture of a princess on it Pink scooters and red bikes Building blocks: yellow, blue and green Colours of paint were red, white and blue Boys 4 green paper 1 orange paper Girls 2 green paper 2 orange paper	Obs 1 – All female Obs 4 – Mixed gender group Obs 4 – All boys Obs 6 – Mixed group (5 boys and 4 girls)
Type of Resources	The kitchen station included a sink, oven, pots, pans kettle and toaster, along with the baby's prams Range of fiction and non-fiction Mixture of books which either gender would be interested in Boys worn outfits - superman outfit, Spiderman outfit, bear	Obs 1: kitchen scenario- All female Obs 2: mixed gender resources Obs 3: Mixed gender resources

Theme	Setting/scenario	Observation
	outfit and some camouflage items	
	Girls worn outfits- princess outfit, animal outfit, nurse outfit and superman outfit	
	Scooters Bikes Wendy house and mud kitchen Slide and climbing frame Building blocks	Obs 4: Mix gendered resources
	Construction area with Lego	Obs 5: Traditional male scenario- building
Play type	Role Play kitchen scenario	Obs 1: Female kitchen scenario
	Book corner	Obs 2: Mix gender scenario
	Dressing up area	Obs 3: Mix gender resources, Gender Specific resources
	Outdoor area	Obs 4: Mix gender resources Not Gender Specific
	Construction area	Obs 5: Not Gender Specific
	Painting	Obs 6: Not gender specific