

0510

The effect of gender and culture on children's performance and participation in daily activities in the educational setting

Anat Golos, Naomi Weintraub

School and Head of Undergraduate Studies in school of occupational therapy of Hadassah and the Hebrew university, Jerusalem, Israel

Introduction: Children's performance and participation in activities affect development, self-perceptions, health and quality of life, and influenced by socio-cultural factors. Performance and participation occur in different environments, including educational setting. Often children learn in co-education settings. However, in some cultures (e.g. religious settings), boys and girls learn in different settings.

Objectives: Examine the effect of gender and culture on performance and participation of preschool children from different cultural minorities in Israel.

Methods: 83 Ultra-Orthodox (UO) and 40 Arab preschool children were observed during daily routines by occupational therapists for 2-3 weeks using the Structured Preschool Participation Observation (SPO). The SPO is a reliable and valid measure that evaluating children's performance and participation in the preschool setting in different areas.

Results: Significant gender effects were found for performance and participation in Learning ($F=15.463_{[1,93]}$; $F=81.516_{[1,116]}$) and Social participation ($F=9.427_{[1,93]}$; $F=37.258_{[1,116]}$), and for participation in Play ($F=41.035_{[1,116]}$), with higher scores among girls. Significant group effects were found for performance and participation in Play ($F=13.131_{[1,93]}$; $F=164.592_{[1,116]}$), and for participation in Learning ($F=33.470_{[1,116]}$) and Social participation ($F=7.025_{[1,116]}$), with higher scores among UO children. Significant gender and group interaction effects were found for Play ($F=4.699_{[1,116]}$) and Social participation ($F=25.963_{[1,116]}$), but not for Learning.

Conclusions: The results support previous studies showing that socio-cultural factors may influence educational practices and gender expectations, as well as performance and participation in different occupational areas of children from different cultures. Results reinforce the need to assess occupational performance and participation in natural environments and develop culturally sensitive assessments and interventions.