

**REPRESENTATION OF GENDER IN CONTEMPORARY TOY DESIGN:  
AN ANALYSIS OF BARBIE DOLL**

**SEÇİL İÇKE**

**AUGUST 2013**

**REPRESENTATION OF GENDER IN CONTEMPORARY TOY DESIGN:**

**AN ANALYSIS OF BARBIE DOLL**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO**

**THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**OF**

**IZMIR UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS**

**BY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF**


**MASTER OF DESIGN**

**IN**

**THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**AUGUST 2013**

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences



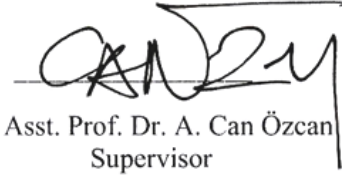
Prof. Dr. Cengiz EROL  
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis  
for the degree of Master of Design



Head of Department  
Prof. Elvan ÖZKAVRUK ADANIR

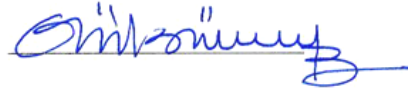
This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our  
opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for  
the degree of Master of Design



Asst. Prof. Dr. A. Can Özcan  
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

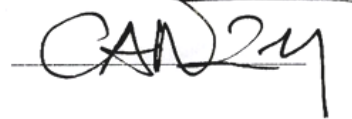
Prof. Dr. Gülsüm Baydar



Asst. Prof. Dr. Deniz Deniz



Asst. Prof. Dr. A. Can Özcan



## **ABSTRACT**

### **REPRESENTATION OF GENDER IN CONTEMPORARY TOY DESIGN: AN ANALYSIS OF BARBIE DOLL**

**İçke, Seçil**

**MDes in Design Studies**

**Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. A. Can Özcan**

August 2013, 109 pages

Throughout the history, toys have always signified gender, in order to make children learn their future roles. Contemporary toys transmit even stronger messages on gender. In this study, contemporary toys are examined in terms of the signification of gender. Focus of this study is the representation of femininity through toy design. Dolls are discussed considering representation of femininity. Finally, Barbie doll is discussed in further detail; including the general design characteristics and messages that the toy transmits about femininity.

**Keywords:** Gender, gender roles, toy design, dolls, Barbie

## ÖZET

### GÜNÜMÜZ OYUNCAKLARINDA TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYETİN TEMSİLİ: BARBİE BEBEK OYUNCAĞININ ANALİZİ

İçke, Seçil

Tasarım Çalışmaları Yüksek Lisans, MDes.

Tez Yöneticisi: Yard. Doç. A. Can Özcan

Ağustos 2013, 109 sayfa

Tarih boyunca oyuncaklar toplumsal cinsiyeti simgeleyen ve çocukları gelecekteki rollerine hazırlayan objeler olmuştur. Günümüzde oyuncaklar cinsiyete dair daha belirgin mesajlar vermektedir. Bu çalışmada günümüz oyuncaklarının ne gibi cinsiyet rollerini temsil ettiği ele alınmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın odak noktası kadınsılığın oyuncak tasarımıyla nasıl sembolize edildiğidir. Bu odak noktası çerçevesinde oyuncak bebekler ele alınmaktadır. Barbie bebek de bu kapsamda, genel tasarım özellikleri ve tarihsel dönüşümü dikkate alınarak analiz edilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Toplumsal cinsiyet, cinsiyet rolleri, oyuncak tasarımı, oyuncak bebekler, Barbie

This work is dedicated to my family

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“One day, a father remembered that it was his daughter’s birthday just before he was coming home from work. Hastily, he rushed into a toy shop to buy her daughter a doll. The salesman started to show him Barbies, speaking: ‘Here, this is Princess Barbie, for 9, 99 dollars. This is Tennis player Barbie, for 9, 99 dollars. This is swimmer Barbie, for 9, 99 dollars. And this is the widow Barbie, for 59, 99 dollars’. The father uttered with shock: ‘But why this one is so expensive?’ Then the salesman explained: ‘In other Barbies, there is only the Barbie doll that is in the package. But with the widow Barbie there are Ken’s house, car and also another friend is contained within the package.’”

The beginning point of this thesis was this joke that my advisor A. Can Özcan has told me. I owe great thanks to him for being a *teacher* for me by every means, both during my studentship and research assistance in İzmir University of Economics. This thesis would not come into life without his inspiration in the first place, motivating attitude and changes he caused in my idea of life.

I would also like to thank Aren Kurtgözü, who has been a great supporter during the first half of the process. As being a student for a very long time in Izmir University of Economics, I am sincerely thankful to all my instructors in the department for everything I have learned from them.

I am also grateful to Burak Baykara, Gözde Batmacı and Hakan Diniz for the greatest knowledge they provided to me.

Last, I would like to thank all my colleagues who have been no different than brothers and sisters. I will never forget the greatest time I had with them.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ÖZET.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. Aim of the Study.....	2
1.2. Methodology.....	3
2. The Concept of Gender.....	4
2.1. Scientific Approaches Towards Gender.....	9
2.1.1. Social Sciences.....	9
2.1.2. Life Sciences.....	13
2.2. Childhood as a Gender Issue.....	15
2.2.1. The Concept of Childhood.....	16
2.2.2. How Do Children Learn Gender.....	17
3. Gender Related Characteristics of Contemporary Toy Design.....	21
3.1. Role of Toys in Child Development.....	23
3.2. Gender Classification of Toys.....	28
3.2.1. Masculine Toys.....	43
3.2.2. Feminine Toys.....	49
3.3. Representative Design Characteristics of Dolls.....	52
4. Barbie as a Toy.....	70
4.1. Historical Design Development.....	72
4.2. General Design Characteristics.....	83
4.3. Femininity Represented Through Barbie.....	89
4.4. Barbie in Turkey.....	92



5. Findings and Discussion.....	97
6. Conclusion.....	107

## LIST OF TABLES

### TABLE

3.2.1. Toy Classification of Roger Coillois.....	29
3.2.2. Toy Classification of Bühler.....	30
3.2.3. Classification of Archeological Toys that are Located in Turkish Museums.....	31
3.2.4. Possible Gender Classification of Toys.....	42
5.1. Answers for Question 2.....	97
5.2. Answers for Question 3.....	98
5.3. Answers for Question 4.....	99
5.4. Answers for Question 5.....	100
5.5. Answers for Question 6.....	101
5.6. Answers for Question 7.....	102

## LIST OF FIGURES

### FIGURE

1. Popular Play Types of 2006-2007 for Age and Gender .....	33
2. Popular Toys of 2006-2007 for Age and Gender .....	34
3. Boys Aisle in Toys R Us Store in Hong Kong .....	39
4. Girls Aisle in Toys R Us Store in Hong Kong .....	39
5. Display of Nerf Toy in Top Toy Group's Catalogue .....	40
6. Display of a Doll House in Top Toy Group's Catalogue .....	41
7. G.I. Joe Retaliation Joe Colton Figure of Hasbro .....	45
8. 'Mortar Combat' Action Man .....	47
9. True Heroes 'Rescue Heroes' Toys .....	48
10. Furby Toy of Hasbro in Purple Color .....	50
11. My Little Pony Walkin' Talkin' Pinkie Pie Pony Figure .....	51
12. Easy-Bake Oven by Hasbro .....	53
13. A Mermaid Tale 2 Ken Doll .....	54
14. Paddle Doll .....	56
15. Rag Doll .....	57
16. Sonneberg Doll .....	60
17. Emile Jumeau Bébé doll .....	61
18. My Dream Baby Doll from circa 1910 .....	63
19. Cissy Doll by Madame Alexander .....	64
20. Bratz Dolls .....	65
21. Winx Dolls .....	66
22. Hot Toys True Type 12" Figure Body Cuban Female .....	67
23. Folkloric Doll from Anatolia .....	69
24. Bild Lilli Doll .....	73
25. First Barbie Doll .....	75
26. A Collection of Career Barbies .....	76
27. First Black Barbie Doll, 1980 .....	78
28. Hispanic Barbie, 1980 .....	79
29. The Bob Mackie Platinum doll, released in 1991 .....	81

30. Illustration of Barbie and a Real woman by Nikolay Lamm.....	82
31. Body that is used in 80s and 90 and body that contemporarily used.....	85
32. Picture of Valeria Lukyanova.....	86
33. A Collection of Fatoş Toys from the National Toy Museum in Istanbul.....	94
34. PVC Doll manufactured by Fatoş Toy Industry.....	95

## VITA

Born in 1990 in İzmir, Seçil İçke was graduated from Izmir University of Economics, department of Industrial Design in 2011. After, she has started Design Studies Graduate Program in Izmir University of Economics. She has been working as a research assistant in the department of Industrial Design Izmir University of Economics since 2011.

## **1. Introduction**

Gender is essential for the conception of selfhood and a significant determinant factor in the organization of social structure. Social relations, hierarchies and governmental organizations are founded on gender. As well as being determined by the biological conditions sex brings, social factors play an important role on an individual's construction of gender identity. Scholars in the field of social sciences stress out that gender is constructed through social practices. These social practices are most especially influential during the childhood period.

The act of playing have a significant role on children's learning of gender roles. Toys, as being a considerable part of playing activity, signify various notions on gender that are influential for children. The gender roles and values that are represented by toys are distinct for boys and girls. The heavily characterization of toys that popular culture has brought about has made this distinction even more significant. Contemporary toys transmit strong messages on gender, supported by the use of media and advertisements.

In this study, primarily a review of gender terminology is made. Secondly, the concept of childhood is covered in the framework of gender issue and the social construction of gender in childhood period is mentioned. Thirdly, contemporary toys are discussed analyzing the ways that they represent gender. In this chapter, gender categorization of toys is introduced through considering both historical and contemporary examples. Then, toys are discussed within the framework of gender categorization, including a broader analysis of feminine toys since the focus of this

study is on the representation of femininity. Then, gender signification in dolls is examined, following the sequence in the history of dolls. Various different ways that dolls signify gender is the main focus of this chapter. Fourthly, Barbie doll is discussed regarding the representation of gender. This is followed by the fifth chapter in which the findings of the survey on Barbie doll are mentioned. Finally, a conclusion is made, discussing the findings of the study in general.

### **1.1. Aim of the Study**

It was observed that there is a lack of study in design studies literature that covers representation of gender in contemporary Western toys as well as traditional Anatolian toys. Regarding this gap in literature, this study mainly aims to analyze what kind of ideologies on gender is being transmitted through toy design, focusing on the representation of femininity. Representation of male and female body and the distinctions amongst these are other topics of concern. Also, what kind of social and gender roles are defined by toy design is another matter of this study.

### **1.2. Methodology**

In this study, four methods were used which are literature review, semiotic analysis, survey application and interviewing.

To summarize each of them; literature review covered the topics of gender, childhood and toys, which are the main topics of this study. Main gender

terminology was reviewed primarily, followed by an introduction to viewpoints of life sciences and social sciences on the issue of gender. Childhood was also reviewed from the perspective of gender, regarding its significance in the construction of gender identity. Finally, broader research has been made on the issue of toys, focusing on Barbie doll. Representative design elements of selected contemporary toys and Barbie have been the basement of the review.

Secondly, the semiotic analysis of contemporary toys has been made within the context of the study. This analysis has covered gender categories of toys, which are introduced in detail in the following chapters. Method of this analysis is to cover what is being represented by the toy at the level of denotation and connotation. And the products have been analyzed according to which social and interpretative codes that they represent. The focus of the analysis is on feminine toys –which refer to toys addressed at girls- and dolls since those chapters are followed by the case study of Barbie and in order to make a comparison of Barbie with other feminine toys, a detailed analysis of those toys is essential.

One survey was applied as part of this study on 100 participants including 71 women and 29 men. Questions aimed to figure out the general opinion on the social and gender roles that Barbie signifies.

Three people were interviewed in the framework of this study. A face to face interview was made with Gözde Batmacı, who is a professional psychologist in *Küçük Şeyler Kindergarden* in İnciraltı, İzmir. An online interview was made with Burak Baykara, associated professor in psychiatry department of *9 Eylül University*



of İzmir. Another online interview was carried out with Hakan Diniz, industrial designer who is the company commander at *Studio HDD* which has worked in collaboration with Hasbro.

## **2. The Concept of Gender**

Gender is one of the most important attributes that makes us who we are, and an essential key point in the organization of the society. Gender constructs the basement of our identities, and other factors such as culture, religion, work and social environment are built upon this basement (Condry, 1984).

Beasley (2005, p.11) defines gender as “the social process of dividing up people and social practices along the lines of sexed identities”. Also, Kessler and McKenna have defined gender as (1978 cited in Wharton, 2005, p.7) is “psychological, social, and cultural aspects of maleness and femaleness”. In other words, gender means the social practices and roles that are defined by our biological sex.

In modern Western societies, two accepted categories of gender are male and female. Categorizing individuals into two categories, in other words ‘gendering’ them inevitably creates a hierarchy. One category has to be dominant and privileged to the other. As Beasley states:

*“Gender in Western society refers to a binary division (into two categories) of human beings and social practices to the point of this division even being constructed as oppositional. We see this at work in the phrase ‘the opposite sex’. The two categories are not merely regarded as distinct and opposed, they are also put into a hierarchy in which one is typically cast as positive and the other negative.”*

*(Beasley, 2005, p.11)*

Wharton also agrees that gender is a hierarchical structure. She notes that it is the action of defining gender itself that brings inequality. Adopting this view, Wharton (2005, p.7) defines gender as “A system of social practices”, which creates and maintains gender distinctions and it organizes relations of *inequality* on the basis of these distinctions. For instance, in modern western societies, masculinity refers to public places whereas femininity refers to domestic areas, although men and women share common spheres during daily life (Beasley, 2005).

Wharton indicates that gender is a dynamic concept rather than stable. In other words, individuals not only express gender, but also they perform it. Yet, gender is not only performed at the level of individuals, but also at the level of all social institutions, practices and interactions. Wharton states that all these organizations are based on gender inequity. And just as how gender does not merely link to the individual, gender inequity either does not; it is within the whole social structure. To put in other words, it is not only individuals that are gendered, but also the social institutions, social interactions. It is the social world that is gendered. And most of the time we are not aware of it, we unconsciously reproduce gender through our actions and thoughts, taking for granted the gender norms that operates the society (Wharton, 2005).

The state of “gendered individual” or “gendered social world” did not emerge at once; it is a long process that is as old as humankind. To be more focused on the gendered individual, Wharton highlights two aspects about this issue. One is the biological matters that sex brings along, such as physical capabilities, behaviors and

emotions that are caused naturally by being a man or a woman. The other is, which is more related to the framework of this study, is the social process of becoming gendered (Wharton, 2005).

To perceive the significance of socialization on “becoming gendered”, one can think of the huge gap between the distinction caused by our anatomical sex and the gender category. Sex brings different anatomical conditions depend on being male or female whereas gender is what the meaning of it in the social phenomena is. As a result of being male or female, we have different muscular structure, anatomy, hormones and physical capabilities. Yet, as a result of being a male or female within a society, we are exposed to countless differences in social procedures and practices. One can claim with a clear conscience that in almost every existing society, gender is a tool of differentiation that defines the organization of that society. And this great difference between gender categories is a result of socialization (Kimmel, 2011). As Kimmel indicates,

*“From the moment of birth, males and females are treated differently. Gradually we acquire the traits, behaviors and attitudes that our culture defines as ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’. We are not necessarily born different: We become different through this process of socialization.”*

*(Kimmel, 2011, p. 3)*

Masculinity and femininity refers to what it means to be a man or woman in a particular society. Each one develops his or her masculinity or femininity, depending on one’s unique practice of gender, being affected by the masculinity and femininity which that particular society acclaims. Every society has its sets of behavior that is defined for masculinity and femininity, and once its sex is defined, each individual

goes through several social processes from which he or she learns these behavioral patterns. From the time that we become aware of our biological sex, we comprehend that we belong to the community of men or women, and there are some social practices which engage with these communities (Paechter, 2007).

As Paechter notes, societies acknowledge various conceptions of masculinity and femininity depending on their culture and the time period. Still, prevalent notions are hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity (Paechter, 2007). Connell (1995 cited in Paechter, 2007, p.13) defines hegemonic masculinity as:

*“The configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and subordination of women”.*

As we can understand from the definition, hegemonic masculinity derives from the male dominance over female. Despite very few individuals may adopt the every characteristic of hegemonic masculinity; various conceptions of masculinity may link to it. In other words, most categories of masculinity approved by societies over centuries have adopted male dominance and female subordination as a norm (Paechter, 2007).

Having introduced the basic terminology on gender, two main scientific approaches on gender will be discussed in the following section since it is necessary to have an overview on this issue in order to make an appropriate gender reading of contemporary toy design.

## **2.1. Scientific Approaches Towards Gender**

Life sciences and social sciences have differing attitudes on the issue of gender. Life sciences, having an essentialist attitude as principle, regard gender in a correlative relation with sex. This approach basically explains differences between males and females as a result of biological parameters. Social sciences, on the other hand, principally support the way of thinking that gender is socially constructed through various cultural and societal processes.

Children and toys have been an investigation area of both life sciences and social sciences, since toy preferences are one of the earliest gender related behavior of children. For this reason, it is important to cover these two different approaches when it is gender that is being discussed. In this chapter, gender differences will be briefly discussed from the viewpoint of both life sciences and social sciences.

### **2.1.1. Life Sciences**

Mentality of life sciences regards gender differences as a result of biological conditions. Biological psychology, for instance, appraises gender identity based on the biological circumstances that men and women have separately. In other words, gender identity is a result of sex difference. These sex differences involve how our brains work, for instance. That is to say, men and women are different because their brains are different. This is a condition which defines the behavioral and emotional differences between men and women (Sammons, 2009b).

Biological psychologists regard the sex differences as a result of chromosomal structure. The chromosomal difference of men and women brings about the diversity of hormones, which also is the reason for behavioral differences. In the most basic terms, while women have two X chromosomes, men have an X and a Y chromosome that produces testosterone as sex hormone, which creates the tendency to be more violence prone or aggressive (Sammons, 2009a). It also administrates the development of male genitals and masculine behaviors (Kimura, 1992). On the other hand, oxytocin hormone that women produced is engaged to sociability as approved by several studies (Sammons, 2009a).

The hormonal difference amongst sexes defines the development of brain. In other words, women and men experience different brain development and for this reason, they have distinct intellectual abilities. The tendency of little girls to be more nurturing and little boys to be rougher as they play, for instance, is regarded as a result of different brain activity. The assumption of men's superiority in spatial activities can also be another example. Kimura (1992, p. 119) indicates that, men and women are different not in terms of intellectual capacity but intellectual skills, as a result of the sex hormones that the body produces since very early ages. Laboratory tests indicate that men have higher scores in tasks that require spatial skills, such as visualizing a complex three dimensional object and rotating it in various directions. Similarly, they delivered a better performance in mathematical tests and navigational tasks. The situation was the same for activities that require motor skills such as handling projectiles. On the other hand, it was observed that women have superior verbal skills than men. Also, their capability of remembering objects and their locations seem to be better than man. Kimura points out the scientific studies which

indicate that higher spatial and mathematical skills of men are related to the level of androgen whereas women's better performance in speech and tasks that require manual skills are a result of estrogen hormone.

Men and women not only differ in terms of behaviors and intellectual abilities, but also in their anatomical structures. Physiology regards these sex differences as a result of genetic factors and level of hormones related with sex. Main physiological differences of men and women are as follows; Men are taller than women on the average, and they are approximately 20% heavier. They have a heavier muscular structure and skeleton. Due to their muscular superiority, men are approximately 30% stronger than women. Men also have less body fat than women. In percentages, an average woman has 10% more body fat than an average man. Also, women's body fat accumulates on buttocks, thighs and arms whereas men gain fat in their back, chest and abdomens. This condition brings about the visual differences in male and female bodies and affects the representative characteristics of men and women. As will be discussed in the following sections, design characteristics of certain categories of toys are influenced by physiological differences of sexes (Gender Differences: Intro and Physical Differences, 2011).

These characteristics vary from one population to another. At this point, the involvement of environmental and cultural factors in physical development becomes significant. These physical capabilities and cultural factors define the division of labor within a particular society. It is usually constructed as men's performance of some certain tasks and women's involvement of the rest that remains. Male tasks, in

general, require more physical strength and mobility than female tasks (LeVine, 1974).

There are several studies on children's toy preferences within the context of life sciences, since it is an important subject that gives clue about earliest sex differences between men and women. These studies are usually carried out as experiments rather with children or animals. For instance, Janice M. Hassett, Erin R. Siebert and Kim Wallen of Emory University have made a study on rhesus monkeys to observe the toy preferences of males and females. Main objective of their experiment was to determine the influence of hormonal differences on behaviors and preferences. They have experimented with 61 female and 21 male rhesus monkeys, showing them toys to note their preferences. They have observed that their tendencies were the same as humans; male monkeys have shown interest in wheeled toys whereas female monkeys have headed for a larger diversity including plush toys and stuffed animals. However, they also indicate that male monkeys have shown a more declared tendency on wheeled toys whereas the preferences of female monkeys remained to be more unclear (Hassett, et al, 2008).

Although biological approaches tend to define the differences between masculinity and femininity as a universal result of anatomical differences, cultural affects are not under estimated by these disciplines. Culture and learning are regarded to be effective in the development of gender identity and that is the reason for differences on gendered behaviors amongst cultures. On this matter, Simmons states that: "Even though biological factors influence gender behavior, they are heavily modified by learning". Yet, still biological assets are at the forefront; cultural influences and



learning are regarded as additional factors on the development of gender identity (Sammons, 2009a). In the following section, this issue will be introduced from the perspective of social sciences.

### **2.1.2. Social Sciences**

It is possible to state that social sciences are on the ‘nurture’ side of nature versus nurture debate. Gender links to various fields of study in social sciences since it can be regarded as a key element in the functioning of the society. Social psychology is one of them since gender is a keyword that defines social arrangements and hierarchies. Woven together with politics and power relations, and being subfields of gender studies, feminism and masculinity studies are contained within this discourses.

Sociology covers the social phenomena in both small groups and broader scales. In terms of gender, sociology discusses the meaning of being male or female in the social structure, the differentiation of roles between maleness and femaleness and their consequences. Sociologists believe that gender is socially constructed, through seeing and imitating the patterns of behavior that are attached upon our sex (Hollander, 2011).

Interconnecting sociology and psychology, social psychology examines the relationships of individuals among each other and their social environment, considering both social and psychological matters (Hollander, 2011). It had an *essentialist* attitude towards gender issue until the recent years, from 1900s until

1950s. Our behaviors were believed to be inevitable result of our biological sex, our nature. We were either male or female and essentially different. Traditional beliefs about sex roles were adopted. Having the most essentialist attitude, one can state that “Men are more successful at math because they are born to be so”. This approach also reduced gender and sex to be the same thing because gender was regarded as an inevitable result of sex; it had no other choice but to be so (Hollander, 2011).

Batmacı (personal communication, 2013) also pursues this anti-essentialist view of the issue of gender roles. She declares that:

*“I do not believe that masculine and feminine roles such as motherhood or fatherhood instincts and gender norms are internal, they are totally learned. Children are pushed into these roles, either by parental influences or social surroundings. Men and women are only different in their genital organs; the rest is learned through socialization”.*

Society divides social roles into two segments according to sex categories and this situation is first experienced by the individual at very early ages. Our biological heritage is also another determinant factor in this process. For this reason, both life sciences and social sciences indicate the importance of childhood period in one’s gender identity development. In the following chapter, the concept of childhood will be introduced with a brief history of the term. This will be followed by the gender practices that children experience and the process of gender identity development.

## **2.2. Childhood as a Gender Issue**

Importance of childhood in the evolution of adult life is commonly accepted by scholars and led children studies become more of an issue in the latest decades.

Scientific disciplines examine culture such as anthropology, ethnography and sociology puts childhood forward, highlighting its importance in the social phenomena. In modern science, children are no longer considered as empowered, engendered, dependent beings named as “it”. Now they are considered as a distinct phenomenon themselves; socially constructed and being characterized differing from time to time, culture to culture; not adopting a universal conceptualization (Montgomery, 2008).

In the following chapters, first the concept of childhood will be discussed introducing its historical development. Second, social construction of gender identity in childhood will be mentioned.

### **2.2.1. The Concept of Childhood**

An English dictionary would describe childhood as the immaturity period between the age of 0 and 18 (Montgomery, 2008). Wyness (2002 cited in Onur, 2007, p.36) also defines childhood as “a set of ideas or concepts that define the nature of children and their relation with other elements of the society”.

Philippe Ariés refers to childhood as a term which was not known, but *discovered*. It was known that children were more fragile than adults along history; but the entitlement of childhood as a stage took long years. Childhood was not considered as a period in the Europe of the middle age, until the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Ariés shows reason for this situation as the lack of *childhood sentiment*, which he defines as the conscience that childhood nature is different than that of adults, and indicates that it

should not be confused with affection. Children were seen as the miniature of adults in this period; thus they were treated and expected to behave like them. They directly entered the world of adults at the age of seven, not having any special clothes, food, games or toys for themselves. Although their special needs were provided, they could not obtain special care as they can today (Onur, 2007).

There are several socially described stages that define maturity such as baby, infant, toddler, teenager and finally adult. The labeling of these stages differs from culture to culture. As a result of being defined by social context, these periods do not depend on biological borders but the social responsibilities attained to the child by the culture that he or she is part of (Montgomery, 2008). These borders were not precisely defined in the past decades (Onur, 2007). Examination of these stages appears in the context of childhood history, which is an essential constituent of childhood studies. It needs to be examined in order to evaluate children's play behavior since it provides knowledge on how children's place in society evolved before and after industrialization.

### **2.2.2. How Children Learn Gender**

Childhood is an important stage in the development of gender identity. Scientific authorities accept that one forms a gender identity responding to numerous impacts such as biological, social and psychological. During the first 18 months of its life, the infant is in the home environment and treated differently according to whether being male or female, yet not totally aware of the difference. Then, around 18 months, the social factors enter the stage and the infant becomes to realize he or she belongs to a

sex. This corresponds to the time when the infant starts to be aware of one, and of course, begins to understand *language*. Hearing of people call ‘boy’ or ‘girl’ raises gender awareness in the infant’s mind. The awareness phase continues until the age of six, when the child enters a different social environment than home; the school. This is when the child sees the distinction between male and female more clearly and realizes that there are different social patterns related with each category. Now the child realizes that the sexual category he or she belongs needs some behavioral patterns and begins to orient him or herself in order to fulfill these requirements. In other words, the child begins to adopt sexual stereotypes. This phase continues until adolescence. Adolescence is the phase when both biological impacts -hormones - and social pressure are dominant in the individual’s choice of a gender identity, which may or may not match one’s biological sex (Condry, 1984).

Scientific studies indicate that by the age of three, one has a comprehension of self as a male or female. During this period, gender identity is crystallized to remain the same throughout the individual’s life. During this process, the attitude of family is the primary element. As Baykara (personal communication, 2013) points out, the child develops a gender identity depending on the interaction between his or her parents. Batmacı (personal communication, 2013) also stresses the significance of family’s manner towards the child. She defends that families should have a gender-neutral attitude while raising their children. She mentions one of the girls at the kinder garden whose family has never manipulated her to be family. They have never suggested her gender norms, so she grew up to be different than her peers. Her favorite color is blue, not pink like all other girls and she wants to grow up to be a ‘car’.

- *Gender Roles*

The term gender roles stand for the social expectations defined by being a male or female. These roles are learned through the process of socialization. Setting up such roles involves the assumption of, clearly, men and women are suitable or not suitable for some certain careers, social spheres and social concepts. Family is a strong agent where these gender roles are learned for the first time in our lives. This makes the role of family even more important than highlighted before (Schaefer, 2009).

- *Socialization*

As indicated before, the role of socialization is an effective agent in the development of gender identity. Kimmel (2011, p. 27) declares that:

*“The socialization process transforms the ‘raw material’ of biological sex into gender-differentiated personalities and behaviors”.*

To introduce the term; socialization refers to the processes through which individuals take on gendered qualities and characteristics and acquire a sense of self (Kimmel, 2005, p.31). As can be understood from the definition, socialization *itself* is a gendered process. Through gender socialization, individuals learn the appropriate behaviors that are required to be an appropriate male or female within a particular society. People experience the world through the agents of socialization which pass on these sets of behavior.

- *Social Learning Theory*

There are several theories that explain how gender socialization occurs and gender information is passed on individuals. One of them is the *social learning theory*, which in the simplest words, declares that gender is learned through a reward and punishment system. Children get positive or negative feedback to their actions from the social agents on their convenience to their particular gender category. Most significant of these agents is the family, since parents are the most prominent role models of an individual. An example to how parents pass gender related type of behavior on children through reward and punishment can be the attitude towards the crying infant. When a little boy is hurt and crying, father would tell him to act like a real man and stop crying, whereas he would show more affection to his daughter in the same situation. This is the process of how gender typed behavior is learned within the family. To give the definition, gender typed behavior refers to suitable behaviors for males or females, which is comprehended through the feedback that was received for “gender appropriateness” of that action (Schaefer, 2009).

In a nutshell, a child develops a gender identity through parental interaction and social processes. When the gender identity is formed, the child heads for the toys that are appropriate for this gender identity. As Baykara (personal communication, 2013) stresses out; if the family puts pressure on the child to play with a toy that is unsuitable to his or her gender identity, that would not help and the child would refuse to play with it. For this reason, toy design is significant for both giving clue

about the child's gender identity and his or her learning of gender roles that society appraises.

### **3. Gender Related Design Characteristics of Contemporary Toy Design**

Sexual differentiation has been a distinctive element of product categorization throughout the history. In the context of design, some products are regarded as suitable for men whereas some are suitable for women; just like social and gender roles (Kirkham, 1996).

Role of women in design has been a challenging topic within the context of this subject. Having a feminist point of view, Cheryl Buckley defends that design is a male oriented, that is to say, a patriarchal discipline. Within the context of design, women are represented as rather consumers or objects. It is not only designers that consider female subject as consumers; but also retailers, advertisers and design units that designers collaborate with, as further Buckley discusses. Female designers, for this reason, are rather in the decorative fields of design that engages with nature, ornaments or domestic environment; or designers of feminine products. On women's role in design, Buckley (1986, p. 12) notes that:

*“From this discussion emerge two other important points for analyzing women's relationship to design. First, women's cultural codes are produced within the context of patriarchy. Their expectations, needs, and desires as both designers and consumers are constructed within a patriarchy which, as I have argued, pre- scribes a subservient and dependent role to women. The other side of that point is that the codes of design, as used by the designer, are produced within patriarchy to express the needs of the dominant group. They are, therefore, male codes”.*



It can be interpreted from this statement that, one should consider the dominancy of male codes while making a semiotic analysis of an artifact. On the meaning of industrial objects, Buckley notes that it is not possible to evaluate it as a single sided concept. That is to say, there is no one and only meaning created by the designer; yet the meaning is reproduced through the interaction of the user. This is because of the reason that design is a form of representation; a representation of political, economical and social values, all interpreted differently depending on culture. For this reason, various cultural codes should be considered while interpreting a designed object (Buckley, 1986).

Mitchell and Walsh (2007) argue that another female representation that is supported by popular culture is representation of girlhood. As being introduced a branch of femininity, various messages on girlhood is transmitted through media and commodities. These messages involve social roles approved for girls, in the same way how it is for women. As being part of material culture, several products are being identified for girls such as fancy clothing items, accessories, dolls and other feminine toys. This material culture is supported by the idealized body image, which engages with weight, style of hair, idealized breasts and so on. Behavioral patterns are also being defined within the content of this girlhood culture, by means of creating teen idols, promoting of girlfriends and best friends, social networking and so on.

Mitchell and Walsh (2007) also point out that all these elements of girlhood culture are associated with contemporary toys and their promotional campaigns. Ideologies on womanhood and girlhood are being transmitted through toy design and

cooperative media. In the following chapter, representation of gender in contemporary toys will be discussed focusing on the gender categorization.

### **3.1. Role of Toys in Child Development**

Newson and friends (1979 cited in Ak, 2006, p. 26) define toys as objects which are rather generated by the player to meet the needs of a game or readily existing ones which themselves can be a requirement for the player. Yet, toys do not necessarily need to be engaged to a play; they can exist as separate objects (Onur, 2002). Ergün (1980, p. 106) defines toys as playthings which are generated by adults and aim to evoke playing activity for children.

Toys do not merely reflect the changes in society and culture; they also contribute to these changes and support them (Lauwaert, 2009). Here we come to the anti-essentialist views that defend our identities are socially constructed. We cannot deny that toys are important agents of this construction process. Flaming (1996, p.7), for instance, discusses that our demands are socially constructed, just like our identities.

He declares that:

*“In an extreme anti-essentialist vocabulary it is language, culture and society that we are stuck with and which constitute what we take to be real. The ‘we’ that we think we are is a product, an elaborate construction, fabricated out of words, texts and social arrangements such as the family”.*

In contemporary society, choosing toys is a complex activity for children because of the endless availabilities and commercialism that capitalism has brought about. Also, as mentioned before, role of family is an effective factor in children’s preferences. However, there are contradicting views on this issue. Fatoş İnhan, the president of

Fatoş Toy Industry, for instance, believes that the dominance of family started to disappear recently. İnhan (n.d. cited in Onur, 2002, p. 201) states that “Trends are important in toy preferences. Children see other toys in the neighbor, their friends. Also, girls tend to choose dolls that look like themselves. The priority of family on the choice of toys is perishing; children are more actively contributing this from now on.” Baykara (personal communication, 2013) also defends that children has the priority at this point. “Children generally choose their own toys. Normally, in pre-school and primary school years, they choose to play with the toys that match their gender –and thus, gender roles. If they are forced to play with any other toy than that, they would act according to their own preferences” he notes.

Throughout the history, toys have not always functioned as merely playthings. Ancient Egyptians, for instance, used to bury the dead with their toys, so that they can be protected in their second lives. This indicates that toys have also used for religious purposes in ancient times. Furthermore, teaching children social roles through toy design is one of the earliest tendencies of humankind. For this reason, toys are nearly as old as human history. In ancient times, toys were made from the available materials such as clay, rugs and rocks. During this long period, no milestone was observed in terms of toy design; only very basic toys were made. Also, in the middle ages the situation remained the same since the conditions were severe for children. As Onur states, “Toys are products of a welfare society,” a society in which children are able to spare time for play. However, despite the uneasy conditions, middle ages formed the basis for industrial toys. First ages simple toys were replaced by forged iron animal figures and wooden dolls in this period (Onur, 2002).

First milestone in the development of toys was the Enlightenment 18<sup>th</sup> century. As the society started to adopt an indulgent manner towards children, especially pursuing J. J. Rousseau's discourses, toys began to be more and more significant. And in the 1920s, with the emergence of bourgeois class which is capable of sparing time for entertainment, toys started to become widespread. And the dramatic change in the toy culture came with the innumerable production opportunities industrialization provided. This was followed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; improving technology provided the opportunity to obtain a large scale of diversity and enhanced applicability. Yet, the designs still remain to take their roots from the ancient background (Onur, 2002).

With the urbanization that modern society has brought along, people started to isolate themselves from the outside world and private sphere gained significance. Upper and middle class children started to be isolated from the streets in suburban areas and thus their play activities began to be domesticated. Children started playing more often in the playgrounds that are designed for them aiming to provide a safer and more domesticated type of play or just remaining at home and playing in their rooms rather than roaming in the streets. Domestication of play made indoor toys come into prominence. Toys evolved to be the representation of the feared world 'outside', designed for children to play safely on the inside. For instance, construction toys such as LEGO were referring to buildings whereas there were also trains and vehicles in small proportions. Since the world outside is something to be feared, it had begun to be toys' duty to bring this dangerous universe into children's private sphere. And since they reflect a dangerous universe, toys represent adult fears and

anxieties (Lauwaert, 2009). For this reason, toys are almost directly linked with emotions. As Lauwaert (2009, p.40) denotes:

*“From objects created from leftovers to machine-made and mass produced toys, from pastime amusement for adults and children to instruments for a child’s education and learning, toys have become invested with expectations, longings and fears”.*

Since they are created by adults, toys are usually miniatures of the items that are used by them, such as bicycles, rifles, trucks, cradles and dolls as miniature babies or women (Ergün, 1980). As a result of this situation, toys reflect adult life and their opinions about children. This also makes toys function as mediators which prepare children for their future roles (Onur, 2002). And since the roles that are instructed to children are different in terms of gender, there is a distinction between the playing activity approved for girls and for boys. Since toys are mediators of play, they reflect this distinction. Just as Varney (2002, p. 155) states about gender-biased toys:

*“That toys carry such different fantasies for each gender ensures separate dreams, separate expectations, and quite different self-identities. Successes in strong gender demarcation by toy manufacturers who have firm ideas as to what sells best to each gender reinforce for the industry notions that girls and boys are different, but they also promote that precise idea to children.”*

This differentiation in children’s play and toys regarding gender has been significant in not only Western culture, but in Anatolia as well. Some of the memories Onur (2005) collected for “History of Childhood in Turkey” point out that, children of opposite sexes were not allowed to play together and were strictly punished if they did. For instance, pretending to be husband and wife in playing house would not be approved by no means and result in punishment. The conditions were more severe for the girls; it was not an allowable thing for them even to play in the streets in most

Anatolian villages. They did not have much choice but to stay in the domestic environment playing with their dolls and looking after their siblings. Onur also stresses that a differentiation based on gender roles was clearly observed in the toys found in Anatolia (Onur, 2005).

Gender distinction in toys has been visible since the ancient times, in the universal toy culture as well as Anatolian toys. Yet, within the content of this study, gender related design attributes of industrial toys will be discussed. In the following section, gender classification of toys will be introduced and design related characteristics of them will be discussed. This will be followed by the broader examination of dolls as a distinct category.

### **3.2. Gender Classification of Toys**

There are several types of toy classifications taking different characteristics such as size, raw material, target age range or gender as basis. Function of the toy on children's development is also another characteristic that determine a distinction amongst toys. Ergün, for instance, has made a classification of toys regarding the capabilities and skills that they improve. He indicates that toys can either improve imagination and creativity, huge and small muscles, arts and crafts skills, comprehension skills, dance and music skills or involve pretending such as playing house toys (Ergün, 1980).

Roger Coillois (2001 cited in Ergün, 1980, p. 107), on the other hand, has classified toys into three categories that are demonstrated in the table you may find below.

War toys	Arrows, swords, tanks and toy guns
Gambling toys	Dices, tombola
Toys which require pretend play	Dolls and their equipments
Adventure toys	Sledges and carousels

Table 3.2.1. Toy Classification of Roger Coillois\*  
Source: Ergün, 1980

Coillois (2001 cited in Ergün, 1980, p. 107) has considered the type of play that toys engage with while generating this classification. Below you may find a similar categorization that Bühler has made regarding the play activity that the toy engages with.

Toys that engage with action and movement	Ball
Construction toys that link to creativity and generating things with the available materials	LEGO and Jenga
Toys related to fantasy world, which encourage role play and imitation	Dolls and Action Figures

Table 3.2.2. Toy Classification of Bühler\*\*

Function of the toy forms the basement of this classification. According to this schema, it is possible to note that action toys, for instance, require body movement and function as improving muscles and coordination. Construction toys, on the other hand, require creativity and trigger the improvement of spatial skills. Fantasy toys engage with the dream world, encourage to be played in groups, require scenarios during the play and usually are miniatures of personas.

\*Coillois (2001 cited in Ergün, 1980, p. 107)

\*\* World Association of early Childhood Educator

Onur highlights that, similar toy categories can be seen in the historical background of almost every agricultural community. This situation is an indicator of a universal toy culture that reflects the life style and values of the society. In a similar vein, toys that used to belong to ancient Anatolian culture have a parallel pattern with the previously mentioned categories. Highlighting the fact that pre-industrial period did not enable a wide diversity in terms of toy categories, Onur (2002:20) has made a classification of archeological toys that appear in Turkish museums as follows:

Infancy toys	Baby dolls and puppets
Miniature household items	Tables and pots
Animal figures	
Transportation vehicles	Model cars and wheels
Playthings	Dices and spin tops

Table 3.2.3. Classification of Archeological Toys that are Located in Turkish Museums by Bekir Onur, 2002

This classification is also based on the function and type of play that the toy requires. The classification of folkloric toys in Anatolia has a similar pattern to this. The classification Onur (2002) has made is below:

- **Baby dolls**
- Cradles
- Household items
- Transportation vehicles
- Noisy toys
- Animal figures
- Weapons
- Playthings

Interpreting this classification, one can state that a differentiation regarding gender is visible amongst the earliest toys existed in Anatolia. Baby dolls, cradles and miniature household items refer to girls whereas vehicles, animal figures, weapons



refer to boys. Although playthings seem to be gender neutral; they were used more often by boys since they used to spend more time playing outdoors. In an obvious manner, girl toys were involved with domestic environment and nurturing. On the other hand, boy toys courage to play outdoors and involves action. Also, girl toys have more subcategories regarding material and purpose of use. This can be interpreted in two ways; either girl toys had high priority, or there was a serious attempt to define female gender roles at the earliest stage (Onur, 2002).

When all these categorizations are examined, it is possible to notice that baby dolls and miniature human figures are a sub category of all of them, as highlighted with red color in the tables. Creating small scaled human figures for the use of children has always been a tendency seen in most of the cultures and time periods. Adults have tended to generate these figures so that children can engage with them and learn what kind of behaviors will be expected from them in the future. For instance, as a little girl plays with a replica of a baby, she begins to be aware of she will be expected to look after her own baby in the future. Similarly, a boy might engage with toy soldiers.

Another toy classification regarding the present day was made by Kudrowitz and Wallace. Noting that toys afford various types of play, Kudrowitz and Wallace classified these types of play rather than toys. As a result, they have introduced the Play Pyramid, which can be used to categorize any type of toy. This pyramid consists of four edges named as Construction, Sensory, Challenge and Fantasy. Construction and Fantasy categories are described similar as Bühler's definition. As a different category, Sensory Play requires an active involvement of senses, like playing with an

imitation of a music instrument, for instance. And Challenge Play encourages physical or mental competition. The reason why Kudrowitz and Wallace call this classification as pyramid is that a toy might take place in anywhere inside this pyramid and offer more than one type of play. For instance, LEGO engages with not only construction but also fantasy, so it would take place in the Challenge-Fantasy edge of the pyramid. The main point of this classification is to highlight that a toy does not engage with multiple playing activities rather than a single one (Kudrowitz and Wallace, 2010).

A common trait of all these classifications is that some toy categories link with boys while some of them link with girls. For this reason, it is not possible to isolate gender factor from any type of toy classification. As Starr indicates; despite the fact that there are various types of toy classification, gender categorization remains to be one of the most valid one (Starr, 2012). In a similar vein, Onur points out that, although modern Western civilizations have produced so many toys in the last decade that even exceeded the total number of the ancient ones, toys still remain to be gender significant (Onur, 2002). Applying the Play Pyramid method, Kudrowitz and Wallace (2010) have made a gender categorization of toys, which you may see in Figure 1.

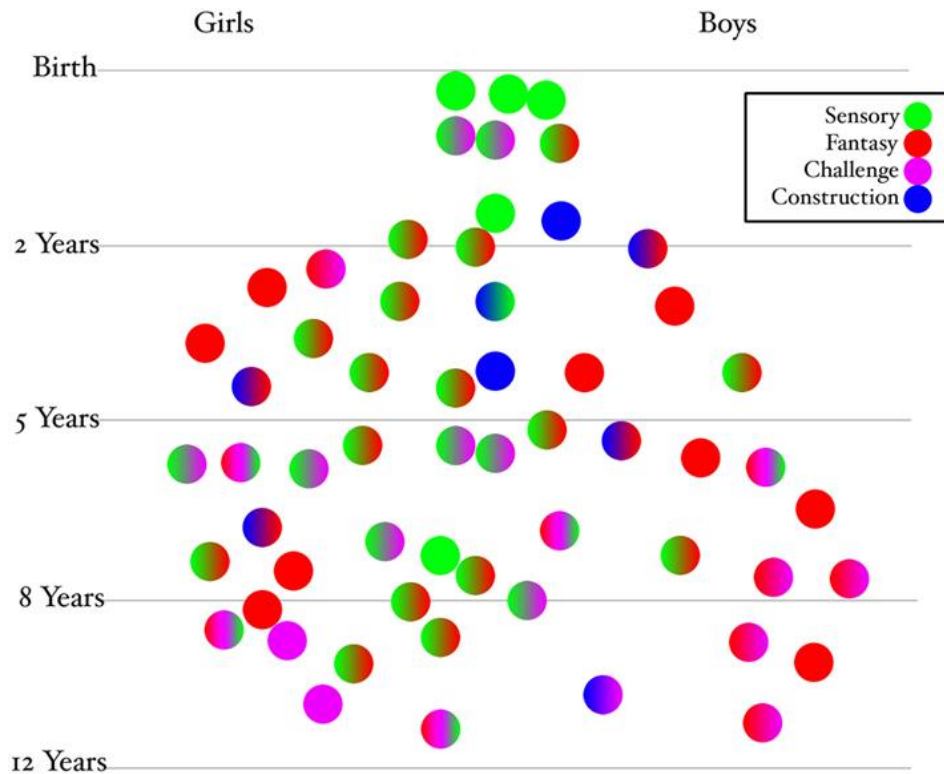


Figure 1. Popular Play Types of 2006-2007 for Age and Gender (Kudrowitz and Wallace, 2010)

When this graphic is examined, it is possible to notice that involvement of senses is dominant in girls' play. And their play does not involve challenge and competition as much as boys' play, even when it does; it is rather combined by fantasy elements or again involvement of senses. Furthermore, constructional elements seem to be relatively linked with boys. Girls' toys do not purely include constructional characteristics; these are usually combined with fantasy elements. It is also possible to clarify that fantasy play involves challenge for boys unlike girls. In a nutshell, according to these findings, girls' play includes the involvement of senses and fantasy whereas boys' play encourages challenge, involves construction and less related with the use of senses.

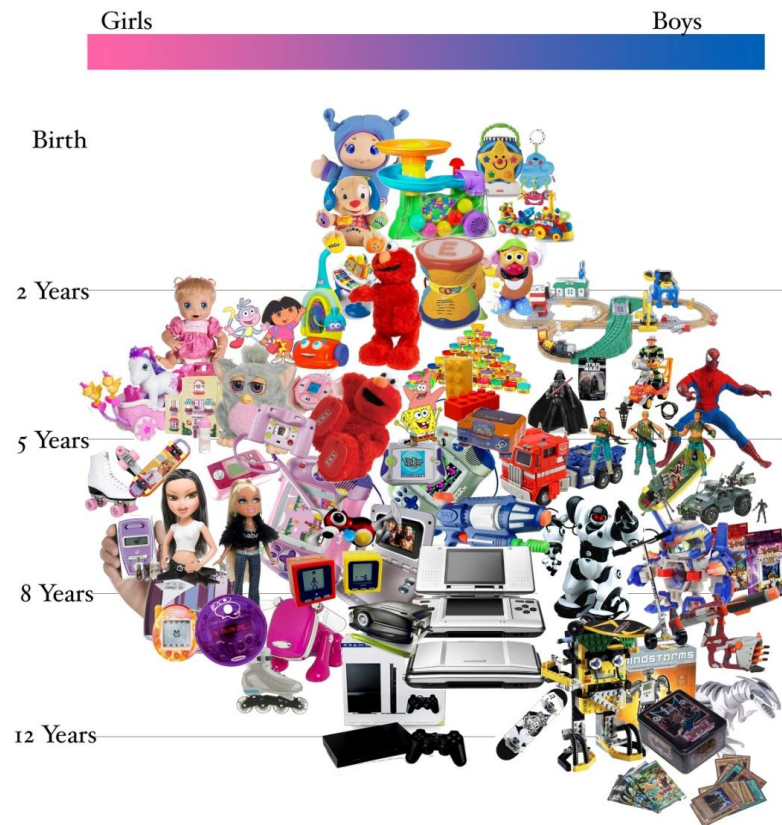


Figure 2. Popular Toys of 2006-2007 for Age and Gender (Kudrowitz and Wallace, 2010)

Even at the first glance, it is possible to notice the color difference in this chart. There is a strong dominancy of pink, purple and pastel colors in feminine toys whereas in masculine toys it is possible to see darker colors. It can also be observed that there is not a sharp difference between boy and girl toys until the age of two. Yet, after that a difference in terms of diversity is becomes apparent. Girl toys generally involve fashion dolls, plush animals, pony figures and figures of cartoon characters; which all have the intention of appearing cute. They do not involve many technological items, except for several remote controls for virtual pets which encourage nurturance or cute pink colored replicas of simple devices. Only toy that engages with physical movement is roller skate, which also intends to be cute in terms of color and form choice. On the other hand, boy toys involve a wider range of

diversity. Most of them are engaged with physical movement, such as the action figures, scooters, toy guns unlike the stable feminine toys which do not provide much feedback. Also, it is possible to see relatively more technological devices with no intention of being cute or lovely. For instance, a remote control for PlayStation has the color of gray, which is the regular color of all other technological devices. Nor the toy truck has different characteristics than the real ones. In other words, it is possible to declare that masculine toys represent the outer world in a realistic way while girl toys are usually kitsch objects with the purpose of being cute.

Blakemore (2005) declares that toys engage with gender up to different degrees. While some toys can be labeled as strongly gender biased, some appear to be more gender neutral. “Strongly gender-typed toys might encourage attributes that aren’t ones you actually want to foster. For girls, this would include a focus on attractiveness and appearance, perhaps leading to a message that this is the most important thing—to look pretty. For boys, the emphasis on violence and aggression (weapons, fighting, and aggression) might be less than desirable in the long run” declares Blackmore. Indicating the beneficence of gender neutral toys, “The toys rated as most likely to be educational and to develop children’s physical, cognitive, artistic, and other skills were typically categorized as neutral or moderately masculine” she continues.

Stressing that they pay attention to provide gender neutral toys in their foundation, Batmacı (personal communication, 2013) also indicates that she does not approve gender-biased toys since they impose some gender roles to children which may not be their duty or they actually would not do willingly. “Personally, I do not

recommend neither girls to play with Barbie nor boys to play with guns and war-themed toys” she says. Highlighting that they do not provide Barbie dolls in their foundation, since she defends that it is harmful for childhood sexualization, she states that they cannot prevent girls from bringing the Barbie dolls of their own. However, guns and violence-themed toys are strictly forbidden. Because as they play with those type of toys, they say phrases such as “I will kill you”, which they are ought not to be aware of yet.

Elizabeth Sweet points out an ironical situation; despite the positive progress that was made in terms of gender inequity in the last 50 years, toys still impose the same gender stereotypes. she stresses out that toys were more gender-neutral in the 70s. Sweet refers to this as a result of toy companies’ strategy to follow the spreading feminist movements that began in the 70s. After this period, the gender division in toy market started to be more and more significant (Sweet, 2012). The division became visible in the next half of the nineteenth century, when commercialism started to peak (Varney, 2002). Sweet (2012) refers to this as a marketing strategy of companies which aims to narrow down the target segments so that they can market a wide range of variations of the same toy.

On the issue of such a rapid transformation of contemporary toys, Varney points out the increase in technological developments. She declares that educative function of toys came into prominence with the improving technology. Especially boy toys started to lean more to improve skills which would lead them to science and engineering in their future lives (Varney, 2002). In her article ‘Of Men and Machines: Images of Masculinity in Boys’ Toys’, Varney declares that Barbie and

GI Joe as a milestone in toy industry since they introduced a new approach towards the issue of gender. They represented totally different gender stereotypes than their previous counterparts. They both came up with characters which are tally unlike each other, yet each of them highly-defined with sets of behavior that suits into their identities. Varney argues that these toys make a sophistication of gender since they communicate appropriate gender values by every means, setting appropriate types of behavior for men and women. Their personalities also are over-detailed; they display characterization at the highest level. For instance Barbie has a social surrounding, a boyfriend, a sister and friends from different ethnic groups. She prepares to her dates with Ken, buying herself new clothes, taking for granted that shopping is a source of pleasure for females. She is also launched with a relatively complex marketing strategy including all sources of media. Her side products, for instance, doll houses, fashion accessories and clothes all revolve around the delight of owning commodities. GI Joe, similar to Barbie, has enemies and needs to be supplied weapons in order to combat them (Varney, 2002).

Toy retailers are also places where gender division becomes even more visible to the eye. In her observation of Toys R Us Store, Starr (2012) notes that the area divided for girls usually consist of dolls and domestic equipments whereas the boys' aisle is full with weapons, vehicles and action figures. She also observes that a sexist division is apparent for the color choices too; pink and white colors are dominant in girls' area whereas blues and navy colors are seen in boys' side. Similar color choices are valid for the packaging too; pink, red and pastel colors are preferred for packages that contain girl toys whereas boy toy packages displays a dominance of



blue, followed by green, red, black, gray and brown (Starr, 2012). You may find two pictures of a Toys R Us store in Hong Kong where the same situation is apparent.



Figure 3. Boys Aisle in Toys R Us Store in Hong Kong, pictured in 2001



Figure 4. Girls Aisle in Toys R Us Store in Hong Kong, pictured in 2001



On the other hand, Hakan Diniz (personal communication, 2013) stresses another issue from the perspective of a designer.

*“It is not sensible to expect toy companies to shape the society. Eventually, these corporations behave with reference to offer and demand. Forasmuch, your client is actually not the child but the family. It is the child who plays the toy, yet the family is the one who buys it. This means that it is the families who are buying those kitchen sets for girls. It is their effort to transfer their values to their children. For this reason, toy companies are in the position of merely considering these demands”.*

Diniz also emphasizes that mostly patriarchal countries demand on gender-biased toys. On the other hand, in countries like Sweden where gender gap is relatively lower, the situation is conspicuously different. Top Toy group of Sweden, which is a part of Toys “R” Us brand, has released a gender-neutral toy catalogue for the Christmas of 2012. The images from the catalogue are demonstrated below.



Figure 5. Display of Nerf Toy in Top Toy Group’s Catalogue



Figure 6. Display of a Doll House in Top Toy Group’s Catalogue

In the catalogue, little boys are displayed as doing vacuum cleaning, helping ironing, playing with doll houses, feeding baby dolls and cooking in kitchen kits with girls. Meanwhile, girls are holding Nerf guns and playing with warrior knight figures. On this radical decision, sales director of Top Toy, Jan Nyenberg declares that:

*"We've received training and guidance from the ombudsman, and as a consequence the catalogues are completely different this year," said Jan Nyberg, sales director at Top Toy. "With the new way of thinking about gender there is nothing that is right or wrong. A toy is not a boy or girl thing; it's a toy for children".*

(Day, 2012)

Yet, since the action itself is ground shaking, it collected brutal comments as well.

One member of the online newspaper utters:

*"It's the war on men. Our atheist secular culture is destroying Christian complementarian gender roles."*

(Twenty two Words, 2012)

While making a gender classification, it is still not possible to divide contemporary toys into two sharp categories as male and female. Judith Elaine Blakemore, who is professor of psychology and associate dean of Arts and Sciences for Faculty Development at Indiana University–Purdue University and former IPFW student Renée Centers have made a study in order to classify toys regarding the degree that they reflect gender attributes. They have asked 1,292 undergraduates to rate 126 toys according to their suitability for gender categories in their study and by analyzing the results of this rating, they divided the toys into five categories which are; strongly masculine, moderately masculine, neutral, moderately feminine and strongly feminine (Blakemore and Centers, 2005).

It is possible to come up to a conclusion that toys represent gender in various ways. Some toys are direct representations of female and male figures, by being replicas or caricatured versions of actual humans. Some others, on the other hand, represent gender by being scaled versions of gendered artifacts. Below, you may find a table that illustrates these statements in further details.

Gender Referring Toys		Gender Representing Toys	
Male	Female	Male	Female
Toy vehicles	Kitchen sets	Action figures	Adult-looking Dolls
Weapons	Make-up kits	Toy soldiers	
Electronic devices	Doll houses and furniture		
	Baby dolls		

Table 3.2.4. Possible Gender Classification of Toys

In other words, gender associated toys are the representations of ‘men’s products’ or ‘women’s products’ of real life. Gender representing toys are the ones which are copied –or intended to be copied- from actual human beings. The categories that will be discussed in the framework of this study are colored as red in the table. To introduce the sequencing; primarily, masculine and feminine toys will be introduced in the following sections. Secondly, *female gender referring toys* will be discussed since the analysis will be followed by *female gender representing toys*. *Male gender representing toys* will also be introduced since they correspond to dolls and thus their comparison with them is necessary. *Male gender representing toys* are excluded from the content of this study in order to narrow down the scope.

### **3.2.1. Masculine Toys**

According to the results of Blakemore and Centers’ study; strongly masculine toys involve swords, tool bench, GI Joe, remote control trucks, toy soldiers and matchbox cars. These toys are the most aggressive and violent ones and generally engage with danger and competition. Moderately masculine toys include big wheel bicycle, power wheels car, wheelbarrow, microscope and basketball hug. They involve excitement and keep the child’s attention alive. Same as strongly masculine toys, they provide actual feedback to the child’s interaction and usually are able to move by their own (Blakemore and Centers, 2005).

Scientific studies point out that boy toys are related with mechanical play which supports development of spatial skills which directs the individual into various fields such as engineering, science and architecture (Sweet, 2012). Results that Blakemore

and Centers have found are supportive, too. They have come to a conclusion that boys' toys encourage fantasy and provide more feedback compare to girl toys. They include machines, constructional elements, vehicle, and sportive elements, which are not addressed at girls.

There is a wide range of masculine toys available at the market today that transmit various ideologies on masculinity. However, since feminine toys and dolls are at the focus of this study, they will not be analyzed in detail. Yet, action figures will be discussed under this section since being scaled representations of humans; they are classified under the same category with dolls in most of the toy classifications. In other words, it is possible to state that action figures are counterparts of dolls in terms of representation of human.

Due to being anatomically scaled adaptations of humans, action figures and dolls can be regarded as more transitional compare to other toys, since the child can identify his or herself with the toy (Attfield, 1996). GI Joe is significant amongst masculine toys since it is a realistic male representation in terms of body proportions and communicates strong messages about masculinity. Below you may see an image depicting GI Joe toy.



Figure 7. G.I. Joe Retaliation Joe Colton Figure of Hasbro

This toy was created as a character as part of GI Joe line of Hasbro, named as Joe Colton. It represents a completely mature man with improved muscular structure. Its masculinity is enhanced by its baldhead and masculine facials. These attributes signify that he has been through lots of danger and adventure, highlighting that he is a brave character. Although these are strongly masculine features, they are not

unrealistic; they can be obtained via training. His physical appearance is not isolated from reality; a soldier who looks like GI Joe can be seen in real life.

Also, the exaggerated weapons contained within the toy emphasize its association with war. The product description on the website also supports this association:

*“This awesome Joe Colton figure is the real G.I. Joe, and he’s ready to jump into your adventures! He’s a patriotic hero with an enormous arsenal, and if his weapons aren’t enough to defeat his Cobra enemies, he’s got some even bigger firepower. Put his missile launcher on his shoulder and attach it to the shoulder harness. Pull the ripcord to launch all 4 missiles at his foe! Will the forces of Cobra get in his way, or will they run and hide? It’s all in your hands! Build your G.I. Joe army with this Joe Colton figure!”*

Combining the text and physical attributes of GI Joe, it can be stated that he signifies male association with danger and violence. Despite having an athletic appearance, GI Joe does not idealize a handsome male; yet he idealizes bravery and involvement with adventure. Action Man, which was also launched by Hasbro, can be evaluated similarly with GI Joe. He was characterized as a soldier of US Army. The illustration below is an example for Action Man toys.





Figure 8. 'Mortar Combat' Action Man

In terms of physical attributes, Action Man is similar with GI Joe. It also has well developed joints for enhanced capability of movement, which makes it associated with action. It is also equipped with side products which are weapons that would help him defeat his enemies. This toy has been criticized mostly for being heavily associated with war.

It can be observed that masculine features are exaggerated in both of these toys, similar with the highlighted feminine features of Barbie doll. Yet, this exaggeration is not for aesthetic purposes but to increase the level of masculinity and to engage the toy with action. These two examples are heavily-gendered. However, there are also



less-gendered male representations as well. For instance, the figure below depicts action figures in male professions.



Figure 9. True Heroes 'Rescue Heroes' Toys

These male representations cannot be regarded as unrealistic in terms of their body proportions, despite there is still a tendency to emphasize masculinity. Yet, generally they can be entitled as realistic; there is no intention to make them very different than their real versions. These action figures are gendered for not only their emphasized masculine features but also their reference to the male professions and social roles.

### **3.2.2. Feminine Toys**

As indicated before, feminine toys have been a distinguished sub category throughout the whole history of toys. Yet, in the context of this study, contemporary examples of this category will be examined and discussed.

Unlike masculine toys that courage boys to go out and discover the world outside; feminine toys are related to sitting and playing quietly in the domestic environment. Underneath girl toys lies the message that ‘You should stay at home keeping busy with domestic tasks, nurturing and taking care of your baby and enhance your physical beauty for male admiration. You cannot be superior to men’ (Starr, 2012).

On the other hand, Diniz declares that infact the situation is changing in a positive direction for girls. “Almost ten years ago, there were not much options for girls except dolls, plush animals and a few board games. But today, companies take more interest on this issue. In the past, toy categorization was made up of the dominancy of gender neutral toys and boys. However, today girl toys are a progressing branch. Barbie’s monopoly has been replaced by Furby, Fur Real, My Little Pony and even with Twister which used to be gender neutral gradually started to turn into girl toys.”

At this point, Furby toys can be a matter of discussion since they represent a different apprehension of gender. In the figure below, a recent design of Furby toy is being demonstrated.



Figure 10. Furby Toy of Hasbro in Purple Color

Furby toys first became popular by the end of the 90s. They were designed as pets that can actively interact with their environments. They required special care such as feeding and affection periodically and if they cannot receive enough care, they were turning into a grouchy mood. Furby toy have recently returned to the market, upgraded by Hasbro. With new technological enhancements, now it can develop a character according to its owner's attitude. For instance, if you show enough affection to your Furby, it becomes a kind character. In this user scenario, the child is practicing parenthood; as a matter of fact, motherhood. The message beneath this scenario is that if the child does not fail to show enough care and affection to his or her baby, it grows up to be an appropriate adult (Buksur, 2013). Just as how the product is being described on Hasbro's website: "*Hug, pet and play nice and Furby may become a total sweetheart*". This message is completely dissimilar with the winding up description of GI Joe toy.

To put in other words, despite not being a replica of readily existing creature, Furby toy can be regarded as representation of a real baby. This representation is not at the level of physical appearance but within the product experience that it provides. Having all these characteristics, Furby toys engage with nurturance and domestic attributes.

Creating feminine abstractions of animals is another way of targeting a toy at girls. Below, you may see an example from the My Little Pony line of Hasbro.



Figure 11. My Little Pony Walkin' Talkin' Pinkie Pie Pony Figure

My Little Pony toys were first introduced to the market in 1983 and have been popular since the 80s. They are heavily cutified abstractions of ponies. Representing a pony rather than a horse is a result of the intention to be cute. The pink color in the body and hair, large baby eyes and cute smile as facial expressions all together enhance the toy's pretty attributes. With these physical characteristics, this toy can be entitled as a kitsch object. The product description on Hasbro's website is as follows:

*“Your WALKIN’ TALKIN’ PINKIE PIE pony figure is on the move, and she’s a walkin’, talkin’, singin’ fool! She’s a busy, happy pony and she’s got a lot of places to visit. She can’t wait to put on her party headband and go, go, go! Are you ready to keep up with her and do the Pinkie Dance with her while she sings her happy pony songs? Get on the move with your WALKIN’ TALKIN’ PINKIE PIE pony friend! PINKIE PIE pony figure walks, talks and sings! Put her headband on her head!”*

When this description is combined with its cutified physical appearance, My Little Pony transmits the message that girls cannot be engaged with any kind of violence and aggression in any way. All objects they have to deal with are decorated with pretty attributes, not involving any relation to danger. It is an important virtue for girls to stay out of trouble and be affectionate.

Toys can represent gender in terms of providing practices related with gender roles. These are under the category of *gender associated toys* which were previously introduced. Below, you may see an image of Easy-Bake Oven by Hasbro, which is an abstraction of an oven.



Figure 12. Easy-Bake Oven by Hasbro

This toy signifies gender via representing of a strongly feminine product; a kitchen appliance. As a physical object, this is a cutified version of an oven in its purple color, ornaments on the side and organic shape. The experience this product provides is totally targeted at girls, who will grow up to be mothers who cook delicious cookies. In this case, the product is gendered for referring to the gender role of women.

As being an important topic of discussion amongst scholars, Ken doll can be regarded as a feminine toy as well. Despite being a male representation, Ken is introduced in a female context and addressed at girls. In the image below, ‘A Mermaid Tale 2’ Ken doll is being depicted.



Figure 13. A Mermaid Tale 2 Ken Doll

Different than the male representations of Action Man and GI Joe, Ken does not have exaggerated masculine features. It depicts a relatively slim male body, although still the muscles are emphasized. Instead of tough face expression and masculine facials, Ken has a mild face expression, slightly smiling. Since it does not have a high number of joints, the doll cannot change positions too much; it is not designed for action and does not provide the user too much feedback. Ken's feminine features are supported by the user scenario and characterization as well. It is introduced as the boyfriend of Barbie; and as being a character, he has different concerns and life style than that of Action Man and GI Joe. He dates with Barbie, accommodates her social surrounding, cares about his clothes and appearance. Girls use Ken doll for role playing, making him date with Barbie, kiss her and so on. He does not refer to stereotypical male gender roles, he defines different sets of behavior. Ken is a considerable example for being an example to how a male representation can be feminine in a different context.

To summarize in general, girl toys refer to femininity via creating kitsch objects which are intended to be cute or referring to feminine gender roles such as nurturing, babysitting or doing domestic tasks, or being placed in a feminine context. Another reference to femininity is the representation of female body; which will be discussed in the following sections through the analysis of dolls.

### 3.3. Representative Design Characteristics of Dolls

Dolls are one of the oldest items of toy history. Small, flint stone sculptures found in the caves in Middle Europe are estimated to be dolls. Yet, according to historical records, first objects that can be called as dolls were found in Egypt in approximately 2000 BC. One example to these dolls which is called ‘Paddle doll’ can be seen in the image below.



Figure 14. Paddle Doll found in Egypt around 1750 BC

This doll takes its name due to its resemblance to paddles. Its main materials are wood and mud, and the hair is made of mud beads. It is almost two dimensional with much distorted body proportions. It is possible to see that female genitals are distinctly marked and the hips are exaggerated. Such an emphasis on genitals is predicted to be done in order to facilitate the rebirth. This indicates that this toy was generated for religious purposes rather than assisting the playing activity. The local



culture, ethnic identity, religion and unique use of material are also dominant in terms of signification. While observing this doll, it is possible to declare that femininity is represented through the accentuation of the basic attributes what makes a woman a woman; the genitals, the hips and the hair. This makes the doll the most basic representation of a woman. Yet, despite being clearly feminine, the doll does not externalize a realistic representation of femininity, in terms of physical characteristics. Also, as an object, it does not give much chance to handle and play comfortably, for actually not being designed for play.

The tradition of dolls which started in Ancient Egypt proceeded in Greek of the 6<sup>th</sup> century and afterwards in Roman civilizations. Several different materials were used to generate dolls after then. In Greek, for instance, clay was used as raw material whereas rag dolls were found in Roman civilizations (Onur, 2002). It is also known that there were small figures with jointed legs and arms made from stone and terracotta in Ancient Greek and Roma. Although these items were mainly generated for religious purposes, there is evidence that young girls were playing with dolls (M. Scott, 2010). Below you may find an example of a rag doll, which is a relatively different representation of femininity compare to the paddle doll.



Figure 15. Rag Doll, originally Roman but made in Egypt 1st-5th century AD

Its material is coarse linen stuffed with rags and ripped papyrus. Anatomically it is well proportioned, despite not giving much clue about gender. It is not easy to state the sex of the doll, yet the bead on its head is estimated to be an ornament, and makes it possible to observe an intention to create a female doll. It is not possible to state that it is anatomically a gendered object; yet it is intended for girls to use. Compare to the paddle doll, it is much easier to interact with, which indicates that its purpose is to be a plaything.

In the Middle Ages, clay dolls were sold in bazaars for peasants and town-dwellers whereas for the loyal ones toys with knight costumes were being produced (Onur, 2002). It is also known that little boys were given soldier figures whereas little girls were given lady figures with fashionable figures during this period. They used to keep them for their whole life and rarely played with them (M. Scott, 2010).

The generation of first dolls that can be called as industrial products have barely been possible in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and they were made for the use of the loyal kids (Jeanne

Damamme n.d. cited in Onur, 2002, p.46). Their raw materials were wood and rags. By the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, “mannequin dolls” first appeared in France, which are rather exhibition objects for displaying French fashion to the world rather than being playthings. Meanwhile, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Nuremberg in Germany became a center of factory made dolls, followed by Sonneberg in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Sonneberg dolls were made out of solely wood at first. Then, by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, casted heads and wooden joints followed. Afterwards, papier-mâché technique became popular in doll production. Also, by 1820s, porcelain began to be a preferable material (Onur, 2002).

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, a more precise workmanship became visible. Glass was being used for the eyes and leather for the arms and legs. Also, wax dolls started to appear by the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, for the children of rich to use. Wood, wax and papier-mâché dolls remained to be popular until the “bisquit dolls” came on the scene (Onur, 2002).

The establishment of Jumeau Factory in Paris in 1842 led to a peak in France’s doll production. The factory formerly manufactured leather and wooden dolls, which are followed by the production of unglazed heads and glass eyes. As a significant development, in 1879, a more ‘baby-a-like’, doll was generated, unlike the previous dolls which represented women. And the developments proceeded afterwards; tip up eyes appeared in 1890 and the first talking doll was made in 1893. Below, you may see a bisquet doll which is one of the traditional Sonneberg dolls.



Figure 16. Sonneberg Doll, originally made in 1890

The doll's body consists of five porcelain pieces including the head. The eyes are made out of glass and the hair is real mohair. There is a serious labor in terms of fashionable characteristics; the dress is silk dupioni and perfectly detailed, reflecting the fashion of its time. The hat is also delicately crafted with the ostrich feathers and ribbons on it. The accessories are golden and again fashionable items (Connie's Doll Studio, 2000).

German companies were making similar dolls to this one, usually imitating the French Bebe Dolls of that time (M. Scott, 2010). In the picture below, Emile Jumeau Béb  doll is depicted, to present an example to these famous French dolls.



Figure 17. Emile Jumeau B b  doll

Similar to the previous one, this doll’s clothing is composed of high quality materials and every detail is crafted perfectly. Use of such high quality materials and very precise workmanship creates high class objects. Prior to being gendered, this doll signifies luxury and loyalty. In terms of anatomical proportions, neither of these dolls represents a real human being. They have the body size of an infant, with relatively big heads. Their facial features are copied from an infant, yet, with their overdone makeup and exaggerated hair they look like a fancy adult. However, although anatomically they do not represent women, it is still possible to state this doll as a gendered object due to other feminine characteristics it has. On the signification of French dolls, Juliette Peers notes that:

*“The French dolls’ personae were elegant and overtly sensuous – even ecstatic- ,n expression, foreshadowing the imbrications of dolls and sexuality often attributed to Barbie and, more recently, Bratz, and blurring the adult/child boundary. The French doll look also predated the melding of*

*provocative sophistication of grooming with children's physical proportions exemplified by the child beauty pageant queen by about a century, albeit in a far less tawdry context. This precedent may not excuse these sexualized, "prostitot" representations, but it does suggest that these cultural idioms have a far longer history in narratives of taste and styling than is usually assumed and are not expressions specific to late American capitalism.*

*(Peers, 2007, p 27.)*

As Peers declares, contemporary dolls such as Barbie and Bratz are not the first examples to distort feminine body to create a fashion doll; and they are neither pernicious artifacts of American capitalism. She indicates that such examples have existed long before too.

Products of Jumeau and Bru, another French company, were imported for the riches from America Europe at that time (M. Scott, 2010). Boom of these French *Bebe* Dolls led to the emergence of a new trend which can be called as a milestone; to produce dolls that look like real babies, unlike the previous miniature adults. These baby dolls, later on, were going to become more and more popular and remain dominant in the market until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (M. Scott, 2010).

Baby dolls first appeared in the market in early 1900s. These were scaled versions of actual babies, in their natural body proportions and clothing. Below there is an example for one of the earliest baby dolls, My Dream Baby Doll.



Figure 18. My Dream Baby Doll from circa 1910

New materials, rubber and celluloid were preferred rather than porcelain in the manufacture of these baby dolls, and they provided better endurance. Thence, these dolls were more suitable for motherhood practices such as washing and nurturing. Moreover, as being proportionally same as a real baby, it enabled girls to hold them as a real baby, just as how they would do when they become mothers. This was an important innovation since toys started to manipulate girls learning on gender defined behavior through practice. These dolls signify, by their user scenario, that it is a female responsibility to take care and nurture their babies (Peers, 2007).

As plastic became the main material, dolls transformed from being handcraft items into industrial products. As they became industrial, soon they became global as well; the designs were defined by the United States, Canada and United Kingdom. It was possible to find similar baby dolls in different geographic locations. In terms of their design characteristics, these dolls were representations of adolescent female body

with proportionally big heads, exaggerated make-up and styled hair. Similar with their French and German descents, they were representing adult fashion by their clothing. As an example, below you may see Cissy Doll by Madame Alexander, a company which has been very popular during the post war period (Peers, 2007).



Figure 19. Cissy Doll by Madame Alexander

An adult-looking version of these fashion dolls, Barbie, was introduced in the market in early 50s. Barbie was a strongly characterized doll, similar with GI Joe and Action Man, which were discussed in the previous section. The case of Barbie will be discussed in the following sections with further details.

With the millennium, the market started seeking new designs. Dolls with distorted body proportions, characterizations such as fairies and princesses became widespread. This characterization even started to overtake significance of fashion



design (Peers, 2007). Yet, fashion dolls still remained dominant in the market with distinctly designed forms. Bratz dolls for instance, have been introduced as a radical alternative to adult-looking Barbie doll.



Figure 20. Bratz Dolls

Bratz dolls have been radical for referring to a different aspect of femininity than the previous dolls. They represent a teenager with no idealistic concerns in terms of bodily proportions or ethnic origin. For this reason, they are intentionally distorted in terms of body proportions; they have huge heads, caricatured facials with exaggerated make-up and teenager-like bodies standing on their big feet. They do not convey the characteristics such as fragility and domesticity as the previous dolls. They are fashionable, funky and cool teenagers. Yet, they receive most criticism for encouraging fashion consumption.



Figure 21. Winx Dolls

Winx toys, which are based on the animated TV series called Winx Club, are another significant example to popular contemporary dolls. Since they are based on fictional characters, Winx Dolls do not intend to look realistic either. Yet they are intended to look charming; although their feminine features such as breasts or hips are not emphasized. However, they convey the aesthetic characteristics that a little girl can identify herself with such as long and slim legs, a tiny waist, shiny hair, large eyes, a lovely expression on the face; complemented with colorful outfits and ornamented wings. In this sense, they refer to a more child-like perception of beauty. Winx Dolls represent fairies, which belong to a fantasy world, with such an obvious intention to be pretty and cute. By doing this, they transmit the message that girls' fantasy world is full with beautiful charming and affectionate creatures with no reference to action or violence. In this sense, it is possible to state their Winx Dolls are similar with My Little Pony toys in terms of signification.

Until now, abstract representations of female figures have been discussed. However, there are realistic representation of women's body are available as well in

contemporary toy market. Below, you may see a doll manufactured by Hot Toys, which is a company famous for producing replicas of movie characters, celebrities and so on.



Figure 22. Hot Toys True Type 12" Figure Body Cuban Female

This doll is a depiction of a Cuban woman. Despite the fact that it represents a beautiful woman, there is no unrealistic feature about this beauty. As a woman, she appears to be healthy in terms of weight, having realistic body proportions. There is no exaggerated slimness in any part of the body. Also, the doll has 28 joints that enable human-a-like postures, which contributes to the realistic features. When all these attributes are considered, this doll can be entitled as the most realistic female representation. Yet, this is a collectible item rather than a toy and marketed at adults.

By combining the realistic and abstract representations all together, it is possible to come up with a conclusion that toys addressed at children generally tend to represent

men and women in an unrealistic way, involving fantasy elements. Realistic toys are preferred to be marketed at adults rather than children.

Dolls are one main category of Anatolian folkloric toys as well as Western culture and they involve a wide diversity in terms of both their names and local costumes. Each region of Anatolia has its own unique type of dolls. Turcoman bride doll of Bursa, Berivan Dolls of Şırnak and Kayseri's Soganli Dolls can be examples of this diversity. This tradition of folkloric dolls is sustained via the re-making of these dolls. These re-made dolls can be found in Art and History aka. Doll Museum of Cappadocia.

Examining these dolls, Onur (2002) has come up to a categorization as depicted:

- Rug dolls
- Dolls made of waste material/grass/strings/pumpkin
- Knitted dolls
- Muppet dolls
- Bride dolls
- Porcelain dolls

Since there is such a wide range of dolls in Anatolia, it is possible to come up to a conclusion that there is an obvious emphasis on girl toys. This can be interpreted as an intention to prepare girls to their future roles as soon as possible (Onur, 2002).

Dolls that are made by using gum tragacanth, also known as tragacanth dolls, are an important element of Anatolian folklore. These dolls mainly represent Anatolian life; the clothes, the daily habits and social roles. Below you may see a doll that depicts an Anatolian woman who is cooking coffee in its traditional way.



Figure 23. Folkloric Doll from Anatolia

This folkloric doll can be entitled as gendered for defining gender roles. It has the traditional clothing of Anatolia, in realistic body proportions. In terms of bodily features, there is no intention to be attractive or charming; despite the smile on the face and blushed cheeks signify geniality. Both considering the outfit and the task that the doll is represented to be doing; it is possible to declare that such a figure can be observed in any house in Anatolia. So this doll is a realistic representation of a villager both in terms of physical features and the gender roles that it signifies. It is a gendered object for defining a feminine gender role. Also, the local culture being represented becomes as conspicuous as gender values. Below, there is another example for the traditional Anatolian toys.

When all these various examples of dolls are considered, it is possible to notice that different aspects of gender come into forefront in terms of signification. Different types of womanhood are being represented in doll design. In each of them, a woman body is represented differently; and different social roles are being defined. The

ideologies being transmitted vary from culture to culture and the target users. In the following section, the femininity represented through Barbie will be discussed, by considering the toy's historical development and design characteristics as well.

#### **4. Barbie as a Toy**

Barbie is a cultural icon, a figure that any girl cannot escape, whether she has or has not owned one as a child. Much further than being only a plastic toy, she is a *persona*, a western female, a teenager, a supermodel or even president of USA. Above all her characteristics, one most obvious thing that she refers to is femininity. Barbie is a female in every condition, as any character she takes on. This is the reason why this toy is mostly referred to as “she” rather than “it” (Rogers, 1999).

Barbie was introduced as a fashion doll, but she was not the first example to this category. Early descents of Barbie were the bisquet fashion dolls, mainly produced by the French and German companies, which were exhibition elements rather than playthings. Barbie is the adult looking version of these dolls, and innovatively a plaything rather than only being an exhibition item (Attfield, 1996).

Characterization has been a significant element of Barbie's design characteristics. From the very beginning, Barbie has been designed and marketed as a real person with an identity, a dressing style, social surrounding and further more. For this reason, Barbie doll has been revolutionary in the toy market not only in terms of physical attributes but also the user scenario and product experience it introduces.

In the following sections, first the design development will be introduced. Second, the general design characteristics that remain the same will be mentioned. Third, the messages that Barbie transmit on femininity will be discussed. Finally Barbie in Turkish toy market will be introduced.

#### **4.1. Historical Design Development**

Barbie's design attributes, both in terms of physical design and characterization, have faced a dramatic change since the day the toy had first appeared in the market. Yet, despite these changes, some main design characteristics have remained the same.

It is a commonly known story that those paper dolls that came along with the newspapers in the 50s were the source of inspiration of Barbie. Ruth Handler, creator of Barbie and co-founder of Mattel, has observed her child Barbara and her friends playing with these paper dolls. She realized that they were imitating behaviors of adult women as they play. At that point, Handler decided that girls could engage themselves better with an adult-looking doll. Yet, Barbie is not merely an extrusion of a paper doll into three dimensions; she signifies a lot of things about the culture that produced her and more importantly, giving instructions on how to be a 'woman' (Lord, 2004).

According to Handler, little girls could not engage themselves with the baby dolls popular at that time because of their physical appearances. She noted that these dolls did not look neither like an infant nor a woman; their heads were too big compare to their body, they had make up and styled hair like a woman, but the body of an infant.

Handler believed that girls needed another type of doll that has more of a woman's body (Gerber, 2010).

Although the paper dolls were a source of inspiration, the descent of Barbie is Bild Lilli, a German Doll that was adapted from a cartoon character in Bild Zeitung. Bild Lilli was an appropriate example for the doll that Handler wanted to create; however, it had a different background. It was actually introduced into the market as a sex toy, directed at adults and was sold in tobacco shops. She was pornographic, directly reflecting the character she was based on; the promiscuous lady who wants to get a 'good catch'. She had the blonde curl tied up with a black ribbon that makes a ponytail, with a broad forehead, raised eyebrows, seductively half-closed eyes lined with black and red lips in a position of kissing (Gerber, 2010).



Figure 24. Bild Lilli Doll



When Ruth Handler brought Bild Lilli doll to the company, the reactions mainly involved dislike. Yet, the design team made some alterations on the doll and Handler contacted Japan for molding process. After a few trials, Barbie was ready to appear in New York Toy Fair in 1959 (Gerber, 2010).

Mattel had always been successful in this toy fair, and Handler was hoping the same for this time as well. However, the result was disappointing. The majority rejected Barbie; and this majority included mostly the men. Especially her breasts raised the feeling of dislike. As Elliot Hander once said, no mother was going to buy her daughter a doll with breasts (Gerber, 2010, p.27). But then, after a while, with the end of the school year, little girls noticed the Barbies at the toy store and finally Barbie got the attraction that Handler had expected.

First Barbie, like all the following ones will be, was following the fashion trends in every detail; wearing a black and white striped one piece swimsuit, with a fluffy, soft ponytail, high heeled slippers and the white glasses that were included in its packaging. Contributing to her feminine look, her nails and lips were red and her half closed eyes were glancing to the side, making her more seductive. Her feet were in the appropriate position of wearing her high heeled slippers. Through the holes on her feet, she could be inserted on a stand that keeps her in upright position (Korbeck, 2001). Below you may see the image of this doll.



Figure 25. First Barbie Doll (Korbeck, 2010)

Without impeding, she followed the trends of the 60s too; with the tailored suits, waist high skirts, hats, long gloves and pearl accessories she wore. She even had the bubble cut hair which was fashionable at that time. Not only with her clothes and hair, but also with her makeup she caught up with trends. Her bold eyeliner and red lips were displaced with more pastel colors in the 60s (Stone, 2010). When wigs became fashionable she followed that too; the Fashion Queen Barbie which was introduced in 1963 owned three wigs, she could rather wear them or solely remain with her golden tripped turban (Korbeck, 2001). The underlying message is that it is a female pleasure to follow latest fashion trends and to do shopping.

Barbie not only followed the fashion trends of her time; but also she adapted to the intellectual movements. Pursuing the feminist movements of the 70s, career Barbies started to be launched. These included a wide variety of professions that would not be regarded as women's work by the society. A radical example was the astronaut Barbie, for instance. Despite the first human to step on the moon was a man, Mattel launched an astronaut Barbie ready to do this in the name of all women (Korbeck, 2001).



Figure 26. A Collection of Career Barbies (Korbeck, 2010)

Yet, despite doing men's professions, Barbie never neglected looking feminine. One might argue that the message beneath this is women need to look pretty for being able to succeed in male professions. Or, from another point of view is that girls accomplish male jobs without renouncing their femininity (Stone, 2010).

Also, Barbie's career choices have always been ambitious. She becomes a surgeon, not *only* a nurse, for instance. Or she becomes the president of USA. Stone (2010) argues that this can be manipulative on girls' choices of their future jobs. If a girl wants to be a nurse she should become a nurse; she should not be imposed the ambition to become a surgeon. Barbie draws the portrait of the *perfect girl* via these strongly prominent career choices.

Yet, career Barbies have never been as available as the princess ones. For most of the majority, Barbie remained to be super model or a princess; surgeon, school teacher, policewoman or astronaut Barbie has not been really memorable (Stone, 2010).

In the 80s Mattel also attempted to make Barbie multicultural (Korbeck, 2010). In 1980, for instance, Mattel launched the first black doll that is actually called Barbie, not represented as a friend of hers. Below you may find an illustration of this doll.

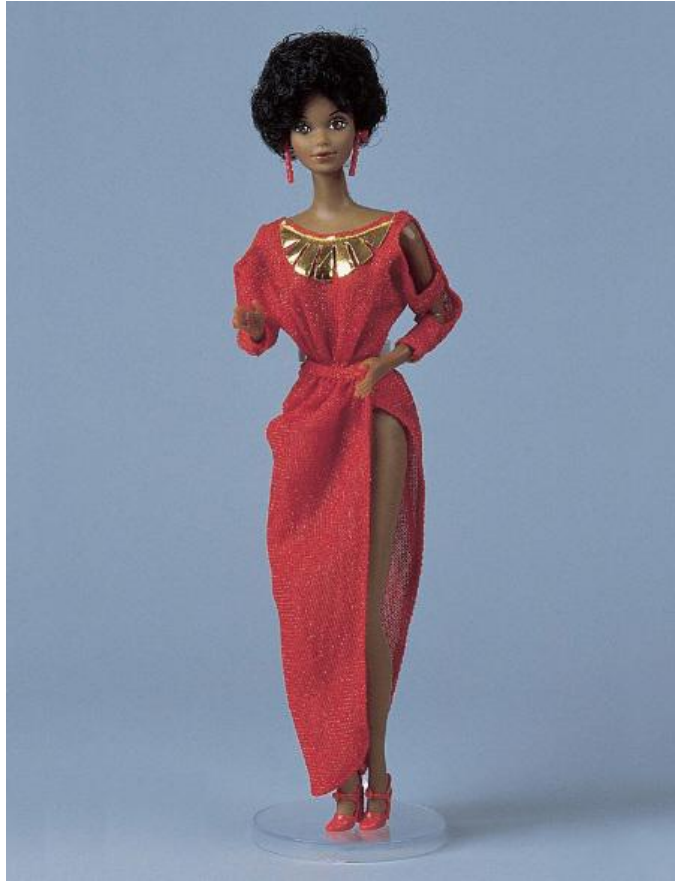


Figure 27. First Black Barbie Doll, 1980 (Korbeck, 2010)

One problem about this doll was that it actually had Barbie's physical features except for the skin tone. It did not reflect characteristics of African people. This was a situation that made it difficult for African American girls to identify themselves with this doll (Stone, 2010). Also, Rogers (1999) refers to this doll as over-sexualized; considering the use of red in every detail of clothing, the deep vent of the dress, low cuts on the shoulders and golden ornaments. In this sense, this doll can be entitled as an orientalist representation of African Americans.

In 1980, Mattel also launched Teresa, the Hispanic friend of Barbie (Stone, 2010). This doll is demonstrated in the image below.



Figure 28. Hispanic Barbie, 1980 (Korbeck, 2010)

Rogers (1999) argues that Teresa is not a proper representation of Latin women, for similar reasons with the Black Barbie. Instead of common physical characteristics of that community, she has similar characteristics with Barbie, in terms of skin and eye color. She only has a few alterations that make her *sort of* Latina. In this case, Teresa is a copy of Barbie with some small changes, rather than a representation of Latin women. Her clothes are clearly stereotypical, not the kind of a Hispanic woman would wear on the contemporary day (Stone, 2010). Rogers refers to her clothing as an attempt to over-sexualize the doll, considering the dominance of red, the accessory on the neck and the black mantilla that she carries. With all these attributes, Teresa is a stereotype of Hispanic woman, clearly reflecting the Western viewpoint on the orient.

Despite the attempt to create a multinational image, Barbie keeps on exalting the Western. Mattel adopts an orientalist manner and creates stereotypical representations. The *real* Barbie is known to be white and Western by the majority; Barbies from different ethnic backgrounds are simply the *others*. Maybe Mattel should have not put too much effort on trying to represent women from all cultures.

As Stone states Mattel's attempt to be multicultural:

*"It's admirable that Mattel continues to work at meeting the needs of its consumers – and it makes good business sense too. But in the theme of female representation in general looms even larger. There is no one way for a doll to represent women as a whole. It would be an insurmountable task for any company to do that. We come in too many different packages and live lives too varied for any doll to capture us – as it all should be".*

*(Stone, 2010, p.74)*

Barbie's line of international dolls continued throughout the contemporary day. In 90s, different than the previous years, Mattel launched collectible series of the Barbie doll. These Barbies were collective items, often sold as limited edition and special in terms of clothing or themes they have. For the very first time, Barbie was targeted as adults, rather than little girls. Below, you may see a Barbie from the Bob Mackie – famous American fashion designer- series of Mattel.



Figure 29. The Bob Mackie Platinum doll, released in 1991 (Korbeck, 2010)

Contemporary Barbie dolls involve a wide variety of categories, including new series and their side products. Collectible Barbies continue to appear in the market, with the addition of movie characters, celebrities and international dolls. The line of fashion themed Barbies has also expanded with the new fairy Barbies and ‘Fashionista’s. Below you may find an image illustrating Fashionista line of Barbie (Mattel’s Website, 2013).





Figure 30. Fashionista Barbie Dolls

These are the new generation fashion dolls of Barbie. With this line, Barbie has acquired an exact representation of fashion models. The improved joints enable the doll to pose and do the catwalk as a real fashion model. The clothes are reflecting contemporary fashion, as it always has been. These dolls represent the Barbie image that majority of people would imagine when they hear the word Barbie. The signification here is that Barbie was born to be a fashion model; trendy and glamorous in every detail.

Despite a high number of various Barbies with different looks, careers, themes and ethnic backgrounds have been launched since the 50s; Barbie's characterization has remained to be consistent. Concepts that Barbie signifies have always been more or less the same, despite the changes made in terms of design. In the following section, these general design characteristics of Barbie will be discussed.

## 4.2. General Design Characteristics

Barbie's design campaign involves various aspects such as the physical appearance, the persona and user scenario offered by the characterization and marketing strategy. The general design characteristics of the doll will be discussed under these three topics in this section.

- *Physical Attributes*

Barbie's anatomical dimensions have always been a topic of discussion. Literature involves several studies indicating that Barbie gives wrong messages to little girls on beauty and body image with her physical traits and proportions.

If Barbie was a real woman, she would be 1.75 m tall, with the proportions of 36 (bust) - 18 (waist) - 38 (hips). Yet, she would have the shoe size of 35.5, which would not be enough for her to stand on her feet, so she would be crawling instead of walking. Also, she would have the Body Mass Index of 16.24, which would be within the limits of anorexia. And since she does not have enough body fat she would not be able to menstruate (Barbie vs. Real Women, 2013).

Illustrator Nickolay Lamm has made an interesting work related with this matter. He has made three dimensional modeling of a real woman and Barbie standing next to each other, in order to make the difference visible to the eye. The depiction of the average healthy woman on the left has the following dimensions: 163.3 cm in height

with the waist size of 85.4 cm, upper arm length of 37.8 cm, upper leg length of 36.7 cm and a head circumference of 50.8 cm (Barbie vs. Real Women, 2013).

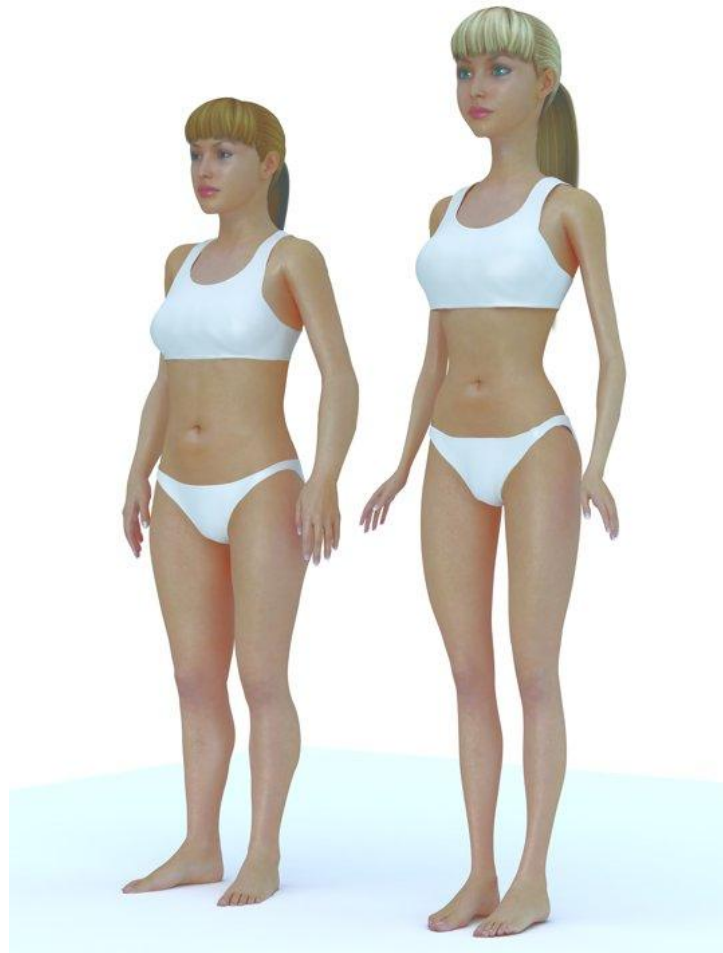


Figure 31. Illustration of Barbie and a Real woman by Nikolay Lamm

Even at the first glance it is possible to see the extreme frailty of Barbie's wrists, ankles and neck. These attributes are caricatured to stress out her delicate features. Also her waist is unexpectedly small compare to her head and hips. This aims to achieve the hourglass shape, appreciated as attractive by the heterosexual male gaze. This is also supported by the breasts which are proportionally huge compare to the body.

Barbie's body proportions have gone through some modification. 80s Barbies had huge breasts and disproportionately tiny waists; this was altered by minifying the breasts to create a more balanced appearance with the waist. Below you may see the transformation of Barbie's upper body (Stone, 2010).



Figure 31. Body that is used in 80s and 90 (*left*) and body that contemporarily used (*right*) (Stone, 2010)

There are real life examples of Barbie as well. Valeria Lukyanova, twenty one year old model from Ukraine, has had several surgical operations in order to obtain the real life physical proportions of Barbie. She has also developed a special make-up technique in order to replicate Barbie's facial features. Below, you may find an image of the Ukrainian model.



Figure 32. Picture of Valeria Lukyanova

Lukyanova has acquired Barbie's extremely tiny waist, huge breasts and flawless skin by the operations she went through. She has received heavy criticism since she had gone through such serious physical modification. Majority has found her looking 'unrealistic'. On these comments, Lukyanova has declared that she is even pleased to be called unrealistic, that was exactly what she was intended.

The ironical issue of Lukyanova's situation is that, how an unreal beauty icon can be disapproved when she comes into real life. Most people might be of opinion that Barbie is beautiful as a doll, a human made artifact; yet, when she becomes a real human, the result can be regarded as bizarre. Actually that explains Barbie's situation; she should be regarded as an unrealistic representation of female body that should remain in an imaginary world.

On the other hand, beyond and more important than the messages she gives on the body image; the ideologies Barbie signifies in terms of social and gender roles should be taken into consideration to regard or not to regard her as pernicious.

- *Fashion Design*

Fashion design has always played an important part in Barbie's popularity. Barbie reflected latest fashion trends of her time. Charlotte Johnson, Barbie's fashion designer, was attending to fashion shows in Europe to follow the collections of famous designers. They aimed perfection while creating Barbie's wardrobe, working with furthest care, using best fabrics and engraving every little detail. Nothing could be cheap and banal about her clothing, it should have been flawless (Stone, 2010).

- *Characterization*

The key point of Barbie's marketing strategy has been to represent her as a real person from the very beginning. In the first TV commercial she appeared, for instance, she was showing up at the runway as a real fashion model. In another following scene, she was a singer on the stage; and then getting ready to throw a party changing her clothes, just as a real person would. This reality was complemented with the song at the background that said:

*"Barbie, you're beautiful  
You make me feel my Barbie doll is really real  
Someday I'm gonna be exactly like you  
Till' then I know just what I'll do"*

Adding contribution to her characterization, Barbie has a social surrounding, different than the previous dolls that were famous at that time. She has a sister, Midge, friends with different ethnic backgrounds and a boyfriend, Ken. She does social activities such as going out with her friends, attending parties, doing shopping and so on. She is represented as the idealized American teenager by every means (Rogers, 1999).

Also, another reason for this marketing success is that it addressed mothers as well as the little girls, considering the importance they have over children's toy choices. Mattel hired a psychologist, Ernest Dichter, who made interviews with 191 girls 45 mother asking their opinions about Barbie. As expected, most of the mothers did not like Barbie and stated that they would not buy it for their daughters. The smartness Mattel made was to catch the deep wish inside every mother-to represent their daughters to the society in the most sparkling way. So they developed a strategy aiming to convince mothers that Barbie is capable of fulfilling that desire, a teenage fashion model which would teach little girls how to look glittering (Stone, 2010).

In other words, Barbie's popularity is achieved through the collaboration of physical appearance, fashion elements and detailed characterization. All these, considering the historical design development as well, obviously transmit ideologies on femininity. In the following chapter, femininity represented through Barbie will be discussed.

### 4.3. Femininity Represented Through Barbie

The messages that Barbie transmit in terms of femininity have always been a topic of discussion by the scholars. Rogers (1999), for instance, argue that all feminine attributes that describe Barbie –charming, fashionable, gorgeous, glittering, delicate and so on- are the ideals of a Western femininity. In other words, Barbie’s feminine features refer to a middle-class, white Western femininity.

On the other hand, different than the baby dolls of the 50s, Barbie represented a type of woman whose place is not kitchen and one and only duty is not to nurture. She was an independent woman took a place in the business world. She appeared in one hundred twenty careers, ranging from an astronaut to a surgeon, an athlete to president of the United States. As Ruth Handler puts into words she had *choice*. In this sense, Barbie’s representation of femininity can be regarded as non-domestic and independent (Stone, 2010, p.7). Having a similar point of view, Rogers (1999) notes that:

*Barbie is no abject icon of oppressed womanhood. Instead, she takes the signs of women's subordination bodily preoccupations, niceness, perky personalities in many instances and turns them into the stuff of success, fun, excitement, and glamour. On other grounds, too, Barbie is a creature of privilege. She is, for most intents and purposes, heterosexual; she is Ivory-Snow white; she is middle-class; she is neither a child nor a senior citizen; she is able bodied.*

*(Rogers, 1999, p.36)*

Rogers (1999) also notes that, everything about Barbie is feminine, not any single feature of her is gender-neutral or masculine. She masquerades as various characters in her very unique, yet still feminine way. She always manages to maintain that feminine look; she is never under the risk of appearing masculine, or even less-



feminine. However, she declares that this femininity is contradictory. Having all these feminine features, she is no mother to a child or a housewife. She never gets married or does housework. One might argue that this is because she is a teenager, yet it is puzzling for a teenager to become an astronaut or teacher. She is obviously an adult woman who has no relevance with family and motherhood issues. She has an undefined relationship with Ken, which does not seem to be ending up with marriage. Rogers states that Barbie has an ambiguous sexuality in this sense. She may be homosexual, since her relationship with Ken is obscure. She can also be asexual, since she does not give a clue about her sexual tendencies. Even going further, Rogers argues that she may even be a drag queen, considering the body proportions, platinum blonde hair and fancy outfits she has (Rogers, 1999).

Barbie has received most criticism for transmitting the message that it is a female pleasure to own commodities and encouraging girls to consumption at a very early age. Rogers (1999) argue that Barbie encourages girls not to *be* things but to *own* things, such as loads of clothes, a dream house, vehicles and pets. Even Ken seems to be a commodity that Barbie owns.

Yet, despite the heavy criticism directed at Barbie, Rogers declares that Barbie is not the source of the problem. She is only a pretty-looking extension of the hegemonic ideology that obligates women to adopt some restricting social norms. These norms are not defined, but *sustained* by Barbie (Rogers, 1999). Ruth Handler's granddaughter shares the same opinions on this matter as well. She declares that:

*“I do not believe that my grandmother had any idea how Barbie would take the world by storm; if she were still in the driver’s seat, I believe there would be ‘heavy’ Barbie and Stacie dolls on the market today. The question is: would the majority of the population buy them? Therein lies the problem. So Barbie lovers can rest easy; Barbie is not to blame, we are. As a society, we buy into this perfect image that has been replaced as a mental burden on the shoulders of women everywhere”.*

*Stacey Handler, granddaughter of Ruth Handler  
(Stone 2010, p.62)*

In summary, Barbie signifies an idealized, Western femininity. Different than the baby dolls in the market, she does not refer to domesticity. She prompts girls to spend effort on looking beautiful and own more and more commodities. Also, the femininity she represents is contradictory in many ways. Yet, despite the heavy criticism directed at Barbie, she remains to be a cultural icon and most popular toy of Mattel.

#### **4.4. Barbie in Turkey**

Development of toy sector in Turkey followed a similar pattern with the Western civilizations, despite being possible later than the West. Toy production had rather been a handicraft until the Republic Period. Then, in the 30s, production enlivened with wooden toys, which were later followed by tin plate toys and finally the spread of plastic (Onur, 2002).

Although manufacturing of dolls were common in Anatolian civilizations, it had been relatively interrupted with Islam. After this period, dolls started not to be approved for having the silhouette of human. Turkish society gradually abandoned its conservative manner of previous periods towards toys after the Republic period and toy market started to revive after that. Also, a proper toy production became

possible after this period, and before that, it merely existed as a handicraft. With the spreading use of plastic and generation of new molding systems, mass production became dominant and toy sector of Turkey began to develop (Onur, 2002).

However, Turkey is considerably behind USA and Europe in toy consumption today. While annual toy expenditure per child is 271 dollars in USA and 84 dollars in Europe; in Turkey this number is 5 dollars. Though, this number has increased from 2-3 dollars recently, with the increase of import trade from Far Eastern. Most popular international toy brands that are available in Turkish market are over 30, some of which are Barbie, Action Man, Jesmar, John Toplar, Store, Motor Max, New Ray, Smooby, Lego and so on. Meanwhile, there are 13 large scale toy manufacturers in Turkey which are Pilsan, Akçiçek, ABC Oyuncak, Magic Toys, Flopark, Aliş Oyuncak, Kral Oyuncak, As Plastik, Dolu Plastik, Simge Oyuncak, Ümit Bisiklet, Fen Oyuncak and Karınca Oyuncak. Amongst these companies, Pilsan, Aliş, Magic Toys, Flopark, Fen Oyuncak, Akçiçek, ABC Oyuncak are the ones who are also doing export (Cengiz, 2004).

China reserves a huge place in amongst the countries that Turkey imports from. Not only fake goods but also products of famous brands such as Mattel and Hasbro that are manufactured in China are being imported (Cengiz, 2004). Although China provides very advantageous production opportunities for large scale toy manufacturers, its dominancy in Turkish market is in the disfavor of Turkish manufacturers. The number of toy manufacturers in Turkey declined from 730 to 30 recently. Fatma İnhan, who was mentioned in the previous chapters, is a significant name in the culture of Turkish dolls. She began from amateurishly generating toys

for her son. Then, together with her husband, they established a small workshop which later in 1975 replaced by a factory where they started to produce dolls with high technology for the first time in Turkey. After establishing the incorporate company, their production area expanded in 1984. The year after that, they began to produce dolls with movable joints (Onur, 2002). This corresponds to eighteen years later than Twist N Turn Barbie which had a bendable waist joint as innovation (Korbeck, 2001).

Fatoş Toy Industry began production with soft animal figures such as dogs, elephants, bears and monkeys at first, from 1971 to 1975. You may see these figures in the image below.



Figure 33. A Collection of Fatoş Toys from the National Toy Museum in Istanbul

Then, in 1975, the company considered the necessity to catch up with industrialization and started producing PVC dolls. When Barbie entered the Turkish market in 1980s, during Turgut Özal's presidency (Medyaradar, 2009) the company

produced a similar version of Barbie as well. This doll is demonstrated in the image below.



Figure 34. PVC Doll manufactured by Fatoş Toy Industry

This Barbie-a-like doll that Fatoş Toy Industry produced was cheaper compare to Barbie. For this reason, it provided the opportunity to play with a doll like Barbie for those who do not have enough economical power (Fatoş Marka Model Bebek, 2013).

Barbie has received strong reaction from fanatics of Islam. Ahmet Mahmut Ünlü, known as ‘Cübbeli Ahmet Hoca’, has made such statements on Barbie that hit the headlines. He declared that Barbie is sexually stimulating; defending that the doll is not religiously allowable since it is a miniature of an actual woman furthermore, he

stated that such a doll with long hair and long legs is unacceptable and cause girls to sexualize at an early age (Milliyet, 2009).

On these statements of Ahmet Mahmut Ünlü, chairman and chief executive officer of Mattel, Brian Stockon has declared that Barbie is just a children's toy created for little girls to have fun and spend good time (Medyaradar, 2009).

Despite the reactions she received from the religionist section of Turkey, Barbie remains to be one of the most popular toys in the market. And this popularity seems to continue for longer; through the new Barbie series that Mattel launches.

## **5. Findings and Discussion**

In the framework of this study, a survey was applied to 100 participants. The survey consisted of three sections. In the first section; the age, education level and sex of participants were asked. Secondly, the participants were asked to answer the multiple choice questions. Finally, participants were asked to rank some statements about Barbie, according to how much they agree with them.

71 women and 29 men answered the survey; although it was shared in social media and was accessible for everyone.

Only 3 of the male participants have noted that they used to play with Barbie doll whereas 68 of the 71 female participants declared that they used to. The participants' playing habits with Barbie doll are as demonstrated in the table below.

How did you used to play with your Barbie doll?	Men (%)	Women (%)
I used to pretend-play	0	72
I used to change her clothes	3	86
I used to style her hair	3	75
I used to violate her	7	8

Table 5.1. Answers for Question 2

As it can be seen in this table, majority of the women used to change Barbie’s clothes and style her hair as they play with Barbie. This type of play is what Mattel has aimed at; since Barbie was introduced as a fashion doll (Stone, 2010). Pretend play is also common amongst women. 2 of the 3 male participants that used to play with Barbie noted they used to violate the toy. Only 1 male participant has noted that he used to change her clothes and style her hair.

In the next question, participants were asked their opinions about Barbie. The answers are demonstrated in the table below.

How would you describe Barbie?	Men (%)	Women (%)
Beautiful	62	89
Smart	0	17
Sexy	48	48
Chichi	79	94
Flighty	41	23
Occupied	0	6
Intellectual	21	6
Careerist	7	21
Motherly	0	1
Talented	0	20
Foolish	41	25
Consumer	38	37
Lazy	17	1

Table 5.2. Answers for Question 3

Compare with men, women are more likely to appreciate Barbie as beautiful. In general, men have the opinion of Barbie as chichi, beautiful, flighty and foolish; but not smart, occupied, careerist or talented. On the other hand, women appraise Barbie as beautiful and chichi, yet not occupied, intellectual, motherly and smart. Compare with women, more men seem to think that Barbie is foolish and flighty. Also, women are more likely to think that Barbie is talented and careerist. In general, Barbie is seen as a beautiful, chichi and sexy character. Less ranked adjectives for Barbie are noted as occupied, careerist, talented, intellectual and motherly.



Considering these rankings, it is possible to state that despite many career Barbies were launched, Barbie is unoccupied for the majority. She signifies a pretty and charming girl with no intellectual qualities.

The next question refers to the social and gender roles that Barbie defines. Answers to this question are demonstrated in the table below.

If Barbie was a real person, which activities would she do?	Men (%)	Women (%)
Taking care of her clothing style and personal care	97	93
Shopping	83	87
Going out with friends, attending parties	93	97
Advancing in professional life	14	25
Going to school	10	20
Getting married	3	20
Doing housework	7	6
Taking care of her children	0	8

Table 5.2. Answers for Question 3

Mostly rated activities for Barbie are taking care of her clothing style and personal care, going out with friends, attending parties and shopping. These are quite parallel with Barbie's persona. This is also the point where Barbie receives most criticism; tempting girls to beautify themselves and to consume. Again, despite the career Barbies, advancing in professional life is not mostly ranked as an activity that Barbie would do. Activities that refer to domesticity such as getting married, doing housework and taking care of children were amongst the less ranked ones. This

indicates that Barbie does not promote domestic ideals. Intellectual activities such as advancing in professional life and going to school were also not identified with Barbie. This shows that Barbie does not refer to intellectuality either.

In the next question, participants were asked their opinions about Barbie’s physical appearance. The answers are demonstrated in the table below.

What do you think of Barbie’s physical appearance?	Men (%)	Women (%)
Beautiful	62	73
Exaggerated	41	42
Slim	66	58
Attractive	24	34
Unrealistic	34	52
Too feminine	24	18
Ugly	0	0
Banal	7	3

Table 5.3. Answers for Question 4

General opinion on Barbie’s appearance seems to be beautiful but exaggerated and unrealistic. It is necessary to point out that not even one of the 100 participants have appraised Barbie as ugly. This indicates that Barbie refers to beauty for the majority.

In the next question, participants were asked to match Barbie with some social identities. The answers are as follows.

Which social identities would match with Barbie?	Men (%)	Women (%)
Model	72	70
Teenager	41	37
Career woman	10	13
Mother	0	3
Housewife	0	1
Style icon	48	52

Table 5.4. Answers for Question 5

For the majority, Barbie is a model, a style icon or a teenager. These are the designated identities for Barbie since the very first years the toy was launched. Also, Barbie does not signify a career woman, mother or housewife for most of the participants.

The next two questions referred to the ethnicity of Barbie. The questions and answers are demonstrated below.

Which country or state Barbie may be a member of?	Men (%)	Women (%)
United States of America	97	92
United Kingdom	31	37
Spain	10	17
Africa	3	4
China	0	3
Hawaii	24	32

Table 5.5. Answers for Question 6

Which country or state Barbie may not be a member of?	Men (%)	Women (%)
United States of America	0	1
United Kingdom	3	7
Spain	24	24
Africa	86	80
China	97	83
Hawaii	17	15

Table 5.6. Answers for Question 7

In the final section, participants were asked to rank some statements regarding how much they agree with them. The rankings are demonstrated in the pie charts below.

“I believe that Barbie has positive effect on girls’ perception of beauty”.

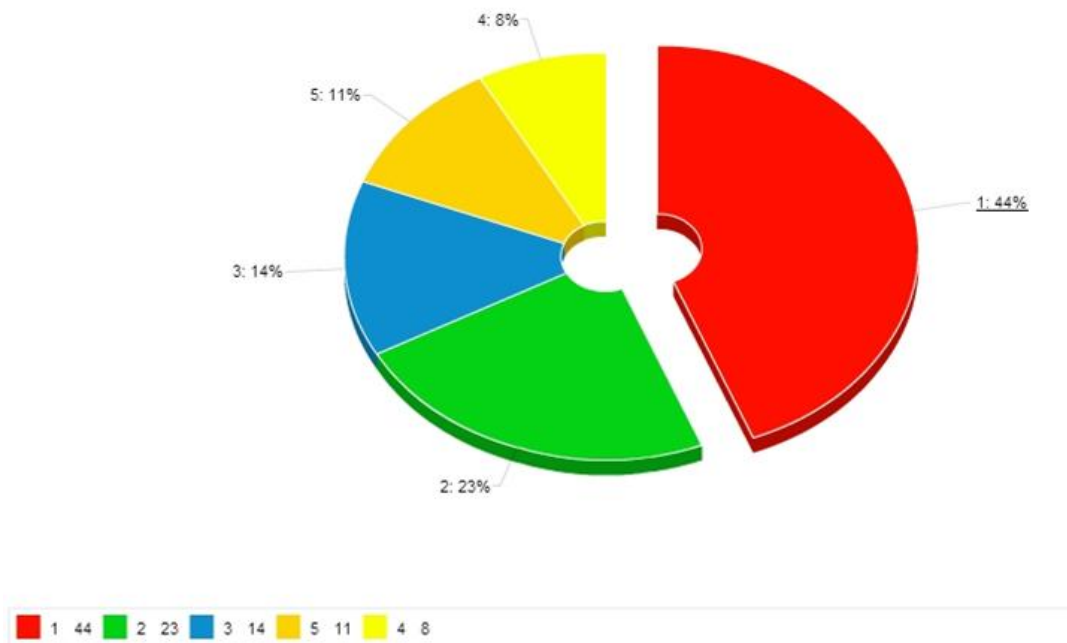


Figure 35. Answers for Question 8

“I believe that Barbie transmits positive messages to girls about their future social roles”.

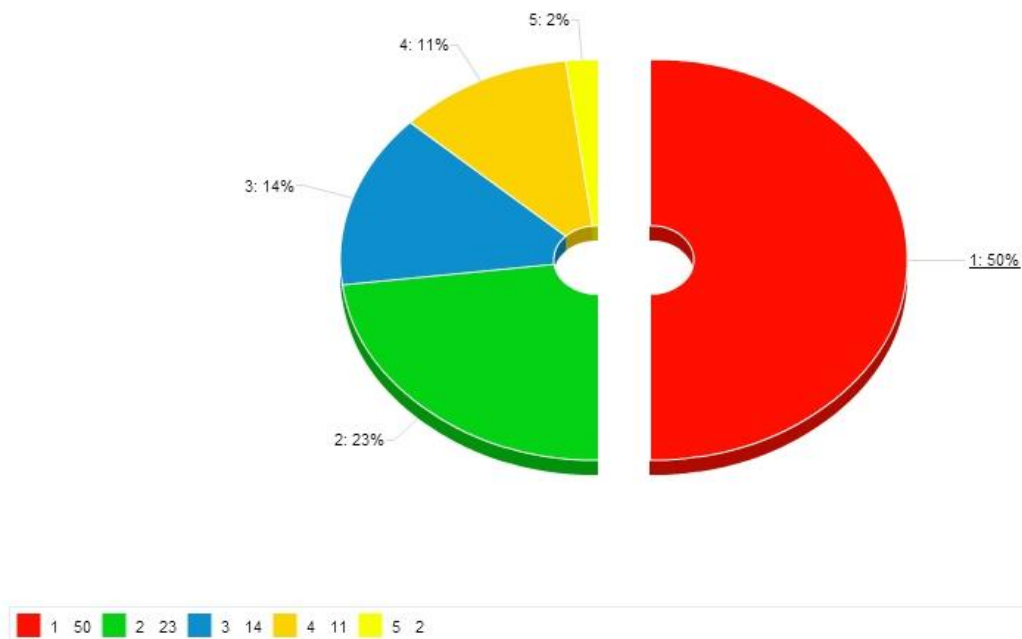


Figure 36. Answers for Question 9

“I believe that Barbie transmits positive messages on different ethnic identities”.

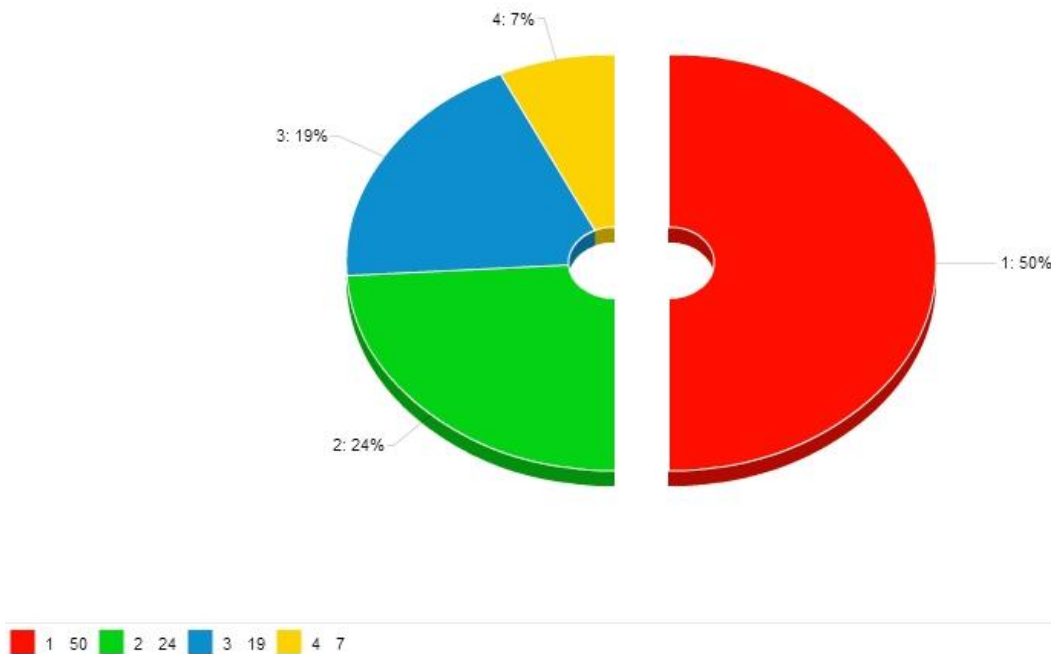


Figure 37. Answers for Question 10

“I believe that Barbie is a beneficial toy in general”.

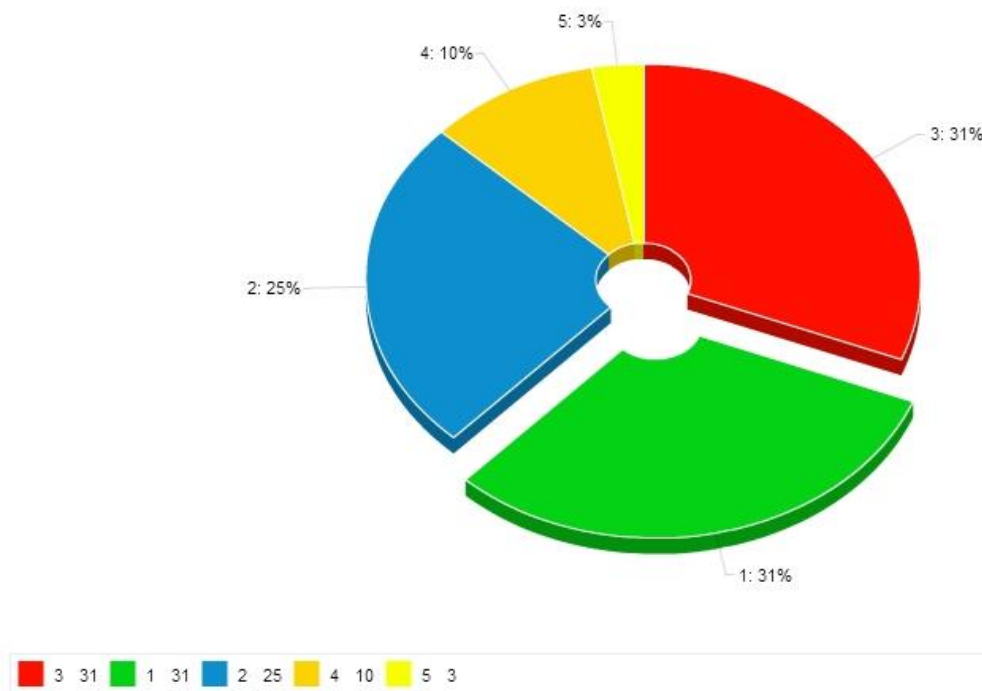


Figure 38. Answers for Question 11

“I believe that Barbie tempts girls to consumerism”.

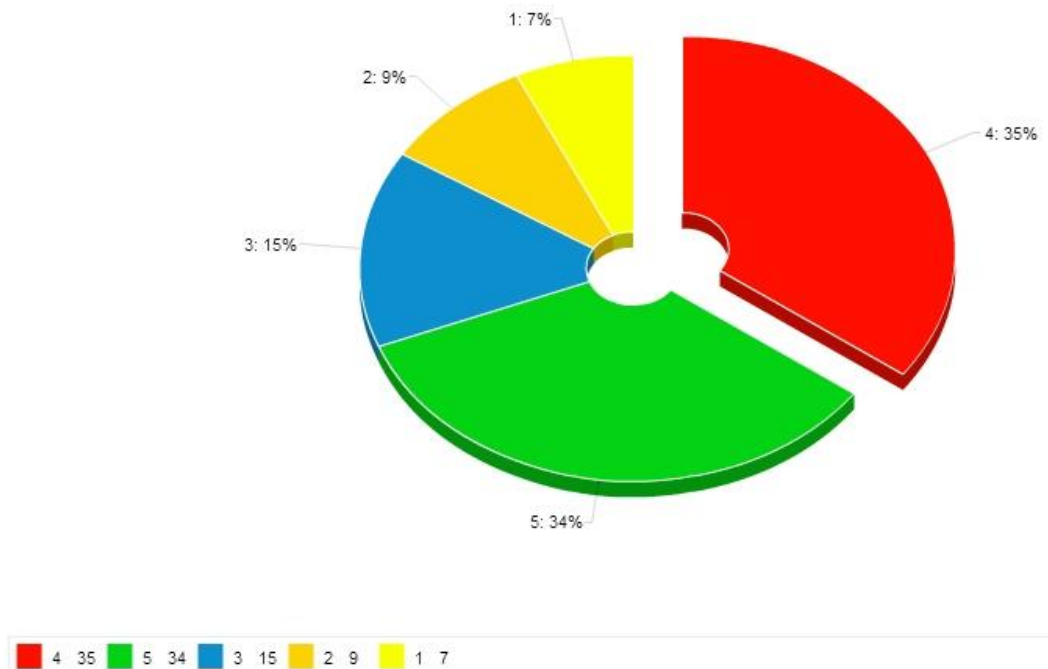


Figure 39. Answers for Question 12

“Please rate your general opinion on Barbie from 1 (negative) to 5 (positive)”.

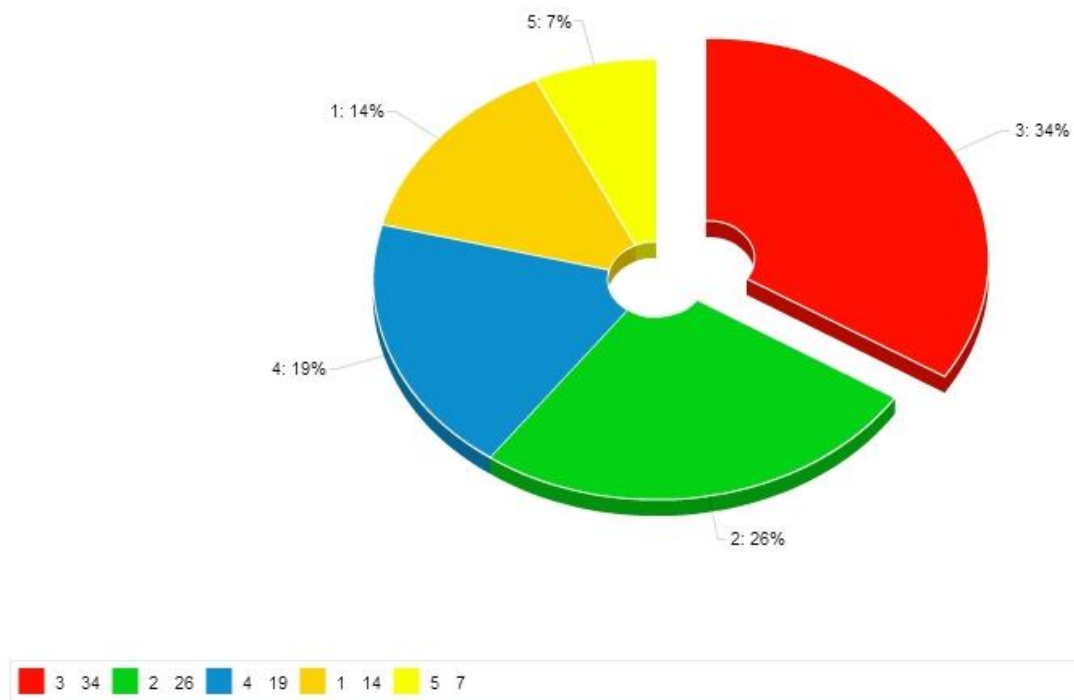


Figure 40. Answers for Question 13

When these rankings are evaluated, it is possible to come up to a conclusion that the majority does not agree that Barbie gives positive messages on beauty, future social roles and different ethnic backgrounds. Also, there is a consensus on the statement that Barbie promotes consumerism. In general, participants are neutral or negative about the beneficence of Barbie. The general opinion on Barbie is, similarly, ranked as 1 (most negative), 2 (negative) or 3 (neutral).

When all answers are combined together, it is possible to state that Barbie signifies beauty and chicness with little or no reference to intellectual skills and domestic attributes. Also, Barbie is regarded as a girls' toy and rejected by the males. The majority does not appraise Barbie as an educative toy and does not agree that she gives positive messages on women's social roles and body image. Barbie's

nationality is seen as American for most of the participants despite the numerous multinational Barbies Mattel has launched.

## **6. Conclusion**

Toys link with gender and transmit messages on gender roles in different ways. Evaluating the findings of this study, it is possible to state that toys represent gender via:

- Defining gender roles
- Representing gender-related real life objects
- Representing male and female body

Some toys signify gender via defining some gender roles. Baby dolls, for instance, are replicas of real babies and intend to make girls practice motherhood. Or male toys such as vehicles and toy guns signify that man's world is full of action and they will be occupied in mechanical things in their future lives.

On the other hand, some toys engage with gender for being replicas of real life objects that signify femininity and masculinity. Miniature kitchen appliances, guns, vehicles can be examples to this category. These toys aim to make children practice the objects that they will be using in their future lives. Also, these toys transmit the message that girls will be dealing with domestic issues, be spending time in the kitchen or beautifying themselves while boys will be busy with mechanical things and experiencing action in their future lives.



Finally, some toys are replicas of actual humans; such as adult-looking fashion dolls and action figures. These toys signify gender via representing male and female bodies. They can be regarded as gendered objects because of being miniature humans. These dolls and action figures, as an inevitable result of the capitalist toy market, are strongly characterized; they represent *personas*. Like actual humans, these toys have names, personalities, different clothes, social surroundings and so on. Being so strongly characterized, these toys transmit sharp messages on gender.

Although nearly every toy engages with gender, some concepts might come into forefront of gender in terms of signification. Traditional dolls, for instance, represent the local life style and culture of their locations. Or collector's dolls which are generally special edition signify the artist's labor more apparent than gender.

When feminine toys are examined from these three points on gender representation, it is possible to make the following statements:

- Feminine toys generally define domestic gender roles. They provide less feedback compare to male toys. For this reason, they define a calm style of play for girls. They do not engage with action, danger and violence in any way. Also, mostly they do not encourage skill development; they mostly signify nurturance or domestic tasks. Or they idealize beauty, signifying that it is a female responsibility to be beautiful.
  
- They are usually kitsch objects, having a high level of concern to be cute. They signify a fantasy world in which every object and living creature is cute; girls

live in peace and have affectionate personalities. This concern can be observed in the representation of real life objects. A kitchen appliance designed for the use of girls, for instance, has unrealistic physical characteristics or has pastel colors and ornaments. In boy toys, on the other hand, it is possible to observe more realistic representation of real life objects.

- It is possible to observe that most feminine toys do not represent female body in a realistic way; they are either very distorted with the concern to be ideal female body; caricaturized or the boundary between adolescence and childhood is ambiguous. The most realistic women representation was seen in collector's dolls; yet, these are not actually *playthings* since they are collection items and marketed at adults. On the other hand, male body is represented in more realistic proportions. Action figures, for instance, have more obtainable body proportions compare to Barbie doll. From this comparison, it is possible to state that toys represent female body in an idealistic way whereas they represent male body in a more realistic way.

Being a significant American icon, Barbie transmits strong messages on gender roles. As a *persona*, *she* represents an idealized Western woman. Unlike the previous dolls, she does not refer to domestic ideals. Yet; Barbie is gendered for transmitting other attributes on femininity. Rather than being a domestic woman, Barbie is flighty; she attends parties, goes shopping, and only cares about her clothes and beauty. She is American despite all the international Barbies Mattel has launched. She is a fashion model or a princess despite the numerous career Barbies.

Barbie has also caused changes in Turkish market. Traditional dolls that are manufactured in local areas or simple dolls that are generated from the available materials are not that widespread any more. There is a much more global toy market in Turkey as well. Children demand towards the imported toys. This attitude has begun with the entrance of Barbie in Turkish market, and it is continuing today with the increasing popularity of other worldwide famous toys. Also, as a toy, Barbie signifies different notions on gender than the traditional Turkish toys. As traditional rug dolls are replaced with Barbie, our local culture is being replaced with a more global culture simultaneously; despite the religious population of Turkey that rejects Barbie.

Every toy engages with gender somehow and transmits messages on gender one way or another. If we put it in this way, it is not possible to decide which is pernicious and which is not. It is obvious that Barbie gives inadvisable messages on beauty and social roles. Yet, when other feminine toys are analyzed, it is not possible to state that they give very appropriate messages as well. They refer to a domestic world for girls, signifying nurturance and domestic tasks. They do not engage with action or encourage spatial skills to develop. They put forward beauty and cuteness as a primary concern for girls.

Yet, toys are not the only medium to transmit wrong messages on femininity. Girls are bombarded with messages on gender roles through media, amongst peers and within the family. It is neither Barbie nor any other feminine toy that will affect a girl's learning of gender roles or development of gender identity by its own. It is a much broader subject that covers the whole social phenomena. In the end, toys

reflect the society's ideals and opinions. If we are to be critique of Barbie or another feminine toy for signifying inappropriate gender roles, we should think broader and be critique of the social attitude in general.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ak, D., 2006. *Oyun ve oyuncak kavramlarının tarihsel ve kültürel dönüşümüne endüstriyel tasarım açısından bir bakış*. Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Anadolu Üniversitesi Endüstriyel Sanatlar Anabilim Dalı.

Attfield, J., 1996. *Barbie and action man: a Kirkham, P., 1996. The gendered object*. Manchester University Press.

Batmacı, G., 2013. *Interview on the effects of toys on children's learning of gender roles* [Conversation] (Personal communication, 28 March 2013).

Baykara, B., 2013. *Interview on children's gender identity development*. [e-mail] (Personal communication, 24 March 2013).

Beasley, C., 2005. *Gender and sexuality: critical theories, critical thinkers*. Sage Publications.

Blakemore, J. & Owen, E. and Centers, Renee E., 2005. Characteristics of boys' and girls' toys. *Sex Roles* 53 (9-10) pp. 619-633.

Buckley, C., 1986. Made in patriarchy: toward a feminist analysis of women and design. *Design Issues*, [Online] Autumn, 3 (2) pp. 3-14. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1511480> [Accessed 13 May 2013]

Condry, John C. 1984. Gender identity and social competence. *Sex Roles*, [Online] 1 Sep., 11 (5-6) pp. 485-511. Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=e1d6d597-68c5-4e3a-a3ce-203e9e9c6974%40sessionmgr113&vid=2&hid=124> [Accessed 12 December 2012].

Ergün, M., 1980. Oyun ve oyuncak üzerine. *Milli Eğitim* 1 (1), pp. 102-119.

Fleming, D., 1996. *Powerplay: Toys as popular culture*. St. Martin's Press.  
Gerber, R., 2009. *Barbie and Ruth: The story of the world's most famous doll and the woman who created her*. HarperBusiness.

Hassett, Janice M. & Erin, R. Siebert & Kim W., 2008. Sex differences in rhesus monkey toy preferences parallel those of children. *Hormones and Behavior* 54 (3) pp. 359-364.

Hollander, Jocelyn A., & Daniel G. Renfrow, & Judith A. Howard. 2011. *Gendered situations, gendered selves: a gender lens on social psychology*. Rowman & Littlefield.

- Kimmel, Micheal S., 2011. *The gendered society*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Oxford University Press.
- Kimura, D., 1992. Sex differences in the Brain. *Scientific American*, 267 (3), pp. 118-125
- Kirkham, P., 1996. *The gendered object*. Manchester University Press.
- Korbeck, S., 2011. *Best of Barbie: Four Decades of America's Favorite Doll*. Krause Publications.
- Kudrowitz, Barry M., and Wallace, David R., 2010. The play pyramid: a play classification and ideation tool for toy design. *International Journal of Arts and Technology* 3 (1) pp. 36-56.
- Lauweart, M., 2009. *Place of play: toys and digital cultures*. [e-book] Amsterdam, NLD: Amsterdam University Press. Available at: <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/ekonomi/docDetail.action?docID=10314660&p00=toys> [Accessed 18 December 2012]
- LeVine, Robert A., 1974. *Culture and personality: contemporary readings*. Aldine De Gruyter.
- Lord, M.G., 2009. *Forever Barbie: the unauthorized biography of a real doll*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- M. Scott, S., 2010. *Toys and American culture: an encyclopedia*. ABC-CLIO, LLC.
- Mitchell, C, and Reid-Walsh, J. eds., 2007. *Girl Culture [Two Volumes]: An Encyclopedia*. Greenwood.
- Montgomery, H., 2008. *An introduction to childhood: anthropological perspectives on children's lives*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Onur, B., 2002. *Oyuncaklı Dünya*. Ankara: Dost Kitabevi.
- Onur, B., 2005. *Türkiye'de çocukluğun tarihi*. İmge Kitabevi.
- Onur, B., 2007. *Çocuk, tarih ve toplum*. İmge Kitabevi.
- Paechter, C., 2007. *Being Boys, Being Girls: Learning Masculinities and Femininities*. [e-book] Open University Press. Available at: <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/ekonomi/docDetail.action?docID=10196992> [Accessed 10 November 2012].
- Peers, J., 2007. Doll Culture. In: Mitchell, C, and Reid-Walsh, J. eds., 2007. *Girl Culture [Two Volumes]: An Encyclopedia*. Greenwood. Ch.1.
- Rogers, Mary F., 1999. *Barbie culture*. SAGE Publications Limited.

Wharton, Amy S., 2005. *The sociology of gender: an introduction to theory and research*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Varney, W., 2002. Of Men and Machines: Images of Masculinity in Boys' Toys. *Feminist Studies* 28 (1) pp. 153-174.

### ***Online References***

A Mermaid Tale 2 Ken Doll, 2011. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://shop.mattel.com/product/index.jsp?productId=12427795>

[Accessed 10 May 2013]

Antique Doll German Bisque, 2013. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://www.ebay.com/itm/16-Antique-Doll-German-Bisque-341-MY-DREAM-BABY-c1910-Armand-Marseille-Sleeps-/26101932222>

[Accessed 18 May 2013]

Barbie vs. Real Women, 2013. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://shine.yahoo.com/photos/barbie-vs-real-women-artist-slideshow/>

[Accessed 21 May 2013]

Bild Lilli Doll, 2012. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://theloveofvintage.wordpress.com/2012/03/10/fashioniconspart2/>

[Accessed 22 December 2012]

Boys Aisle in Toys R Us Store in Hong Kong, 2011. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://www.occasionsofjoy.com/2011/08/toys-r-us.html>

[Accessed 12 March 2013]

Buksur., R., 2013. Bana Furby'ni söyle. *Milliyet*, [internet] 14 April.

Available at: <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/bana-furby-ni-soyle->

[/resulbuksur/pazar/yazardetay/14.04.2013/1693275/default.htm](http://www.milliyet.com.tr/bana-furby-ni-soyle-/resulbuksur/pazar/yazardetay/14.04.2013/1693275/default.htm)

[Accessed 3 May 2013]

Carmel Doll Shop, 2007. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://www.carmeldollshop.com/category/doll/frenchbebe/fbbd-338-g.jpg>

[Accessed 11 May 2013]

Cengiz, D. 2004. Avrupalı çocuk oyuncakta bizimkileri 17'ye katlıyor. *Online*,

[internet]

Available at: <http://www.hurriyetim.com.tr/haber/0,,sid~4@nvid~414745,00.asp>

[Accessed 1 May 2013]

Day, M. 2012. Swedish toy catalogue goes gender neutral. *The Telegraph*, [internet] 26 November 2012.

Available at:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/sweden/9703127/Swedish-toy-catalogue-goes-gender-neutral.html>

[Accessed 23 March 2013]

Display of Nerf Toy in Top Toy Group's Catalogue, 2011. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://twentytwowords.com/2012/11/30/swedish-toy-catalog-goes-gender-neutral-11-pictures>

[Accessed 7 February 2013]

Display of a Doll House in Top Toy Group's Catalogue, 2011. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://twentytwowords.com/2012/11/30/swedish-toy-catalog-goes-gender-neutral-11-pictures>

[Accessed 7 February 2013]

Easy-Bake Oven by Hasbro, 2013. [electronic print]

Available at:

[http://www.hasbro.com/easy-bake/en\\_US/shop/details.cfm?R=8A47B412-5056-900B-10D3-1C924B872020:en\\_US](http://www.hasbro.com/easy-bake/en_US/shop/details.cfm?R=8A47B412-5056-900B-10D3-1C924B872020:en_US)

[Accessed 10 May 2013]

Furby Toy of Hasbro in Purple Color, 2013. [electronic print]

Available at:

[http://www.furby.com/en\\_GB/toy](http://www.furby.com/en_GB/toy)

[Accessed 25 April 2013]

G.I. Joe Retaliation Joe Colton Figure of Hasbro, 2013. [electronic print]

Available at:

[http://www.hasbro.com/gijoe/en\\_US/shop/details.cfm?R=A6D3C839-5056-9047-F558-2A1F22AB6850:en\\_US](http://www.hasbro.com/gijoe/en_US/shop/details.cfm?R=A6D3C839-5056-9047-F558-2A1F22AB6850:en_US)

[Accessed 10 May 2013]

G.I. Joe Retaliation Joe Colton Figure of Hasbro. 2013. [internet]

Available at: [http://www.hasbro.com/gijoe/en\\_US/shop/details.cfm?R=A6D3C839-5056-9047-F558-2A1F22AB6850:en\\_US](http://www.hasbro.com/gijoe/en_US/shop/details.cfm?R=A6D3C839-5056-9047-F558-2A1F22AB6850:en_US)

[Accessed 10 May 2013]

Girls Aisle in Toys R Us Store in Hong Kong, 2011. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://www.occasionsofjoy.com/2011/08/toys-r-us.html>

[Accessed 12 March 2013]

Hot Toys True Type 12" Figure Body Cuban Female, 2013. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Hot-Toys-Figure-Cuban-Female/dp/B002TYZZ0U>



[Accessed 21 May 2013]

Mattel's Website, 2013. [Online] (Updated 2013)  
Available at: <http://shop.mattel.com/category/index.jsp?categoryId=3741284>  
[Accessed 14 May 2013]

M. Alagha., 2011. [Online] (Updated 2011)  
Available at: <http://malagha.com/2011/04/04/gender-differences/>  
[Accessed 11 February 2013]

Mortar Combat' Action Man, 2012. [electronic print]  
Available at:  
<http://www.actionmanhq.co.uk/actionman2/motarcombat.html>  
[Accessed 10 May 2013]

My Little Pony Walkin' Talkin' Pinkie Pie Pony Figure, 2013. [electronic print]  
Available at:  
[http://www.hasbro.com/mylittlepony/en\\_GB/shop/details.cfm?R=70DA5BA4-5056-9047-F5E9-5A352FD0D022:en\\_GB](http://www.hasbro.com/mylittlepony/en_GB/shop/details.cfm?R=70DA5BA4-5056-9047-F5E9-5A352FD0D022:en_GB)  
[Accessed 17 May 2013]

My Little Pony Walkin' Talkin' Pinkie Pie Pony Figure, 2013. [internet]  
Available at:  
[http://www.hasbro.com/mylittlepony/en\\_GB/shop/details.cfm?R=70DA5BA4-5056-9047-F5E9-5A352FD0D022:en\\_GB](http://www.hasbro.com/mylittlepony/en_GB/shop/details.cfm?R=70DA5BA4-5056-9047-F5E9-5A352FD0D022:en_GB)  
[Accessed 17 May 2013]

National electronic Library for Health, 2003. *Can walking make you slimmer and healthier?* (Hitting the headlines article) [Online] (Updated 16 Jan 2005)  
Available at: <http://www.nhs.uk.hth.walking>  
[Accessed 10 April 2005].

Paddle Doll found in Egypt around 1750 BC, 2006. [electronic print]  
Available at:  
[http://www.britishmuseum.org/system\\_pages/beta\\_collection\\_introduction/beta\\_collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=118802&partId=1&searchText=paddle%20doll](http://www.britishmuseum.org/system_pages/beta_collection_introduction/beta_collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=118802&partId=1&searchText=paddle%20doll)  
[Accessed 27 April 2013]

PVC Doll manufactured by Fatoş Toy Industry, 2013. [electronic print]  
Available at:  
<http://earinna.blogspot.com/2013/01/fatos-marka-model-bebek.html>  
[Accessed 23 May 2013]

Rag Doll, 1992. [electronic print]  
Available at:  
[http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight\\_objects/gr/r/rag\\_doll.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/gr/r/rag_doll.aspx)  
x  
[Accessed 27 April 2013]

Simmones, A., 2009a. *Gender: Biological Theory* (Resource on Developmental Psychology) [Online] (Updated 2009)

Available at: <http://psychotron.org.uk/newResources/devGender.html>

[Accessed 29 April 2013]

Simmones, A., 2009b. *The Biological Approach: The Basics* (Resource on Approaches to Psychology) [Online] (Updated 2009)

Available at: <http://psychotron.org.uk/newResources/perspBiological.html>

[Accessed 29 April 2013]

Sweet, E., 2012. Guys and Dolls No More? [internet] 21 December.

Available at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/23/opinion/sunday/gender-based-toy-marketing-returns.html?_r=0)

[Accessed 3 January 2013]

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, n.d. *How toys teach children stereotypical gender roles: a look inside a local toy store*. (Online student papers)

[Online]

Available at:

<http://www.unc.edu/~dcderosa/STUDENTPAPERS/childrenbattles/toysrusdenise.htm>

Toy Museum, 2013. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://melekaknil.k12.tr/etkinlik/oyuncakmuzesi/fato%C5%9F%20oyuncaklar%C4%B1.html>

[Accessed 4 January 2013]

Twenty-two Words, 2012. Swedish toy catalog goes gender-neutral. [internet] 30 November 2012.

Available at: <http://twentytwowords.com/2012/11/30/swedish-toy-catalog-goes-gender-neutral-11-pictures/>

[Accessed 11 March 2013]

Ukrainian Living Doll, Valeria Lukyanova, Uses Plastic Surgery And Cosmetics To Become Barbie, 2012. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://www.ibtimes.com/ukrainian-living-doll-valeria-lukyanova-uses-plastic-surgery-and-cosmetics-become-barbie-photos#>

[Accessed 23 May 2013]

Winx Dolls, 2013. [electronic print]

Available at:

<http://www.unadinoi-winx.com/thursday-your-say-your-favorite-new-winx-toy/>

[Accessed 21 May 2013]

World Association of early Childhood Educator, 2012. [Online] (Updated 2012)

Available at:

<http://www.waece.org/ing/>

[Accessed 3 January 2013]