RESISTANT BEHAVIOR IN YOUNG CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

RESISTANT BEHAVIOR IN YOUNG CHILDREN

By

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The effects of a teacher-directed versus a teacher-initiated condition on the resistance behavior of young children were studied. Twenty-four young children (12 males and 12 females) between 20 and 40 months of age were presented with four tasks. Half of the subjects were observed in the teacher-initiated condition and half were observed in the teacher-directed condition. A 2 X 2 (sex X condition) analysis of variance of resistant behavior revealed no significant differences. The teacher rating scale proved to be an unreliable predictor of resistant behavior. Significant other findings indicated that Ss displayed more passive resistance than active or vocal. Males were found to be more passively resistant in the teacher-directed condition while females were more passively resistant in the teacher-initiated condition. Suggestions for additional research in the area are discussed.

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To my mother, Maudline, and my brother, Matt.

Together we can overcome any obstacle.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Negativism or resistant behavior is a trait commonly seen among preschool children. Kahlban introduced the term negativism and defined it as the "impulsive resistance to every outer influence of the will" (see Reynolds, 1928). Originally, the term negativism was adopted by psychiatrists to describe patients suffering from catatonia and schizophrenia. Later, psychologists and educators described negativistic children as those who displayed behaviors which evidenced noncompliance with adult-dispensed instructions, requests or commands (Patterson, Littman, & Brown, 1950). Bridges (1925) described negativism as a defense against an innate hypersuggestibility or against authority.

Extreme forms of negativism were displayed by autistic children who failed "to respond because of their unwillingness rather than their inability to respond" (Cowan, Hoddinott & Wright, 1965). According to Cowan et al. (1965) this failure to respond might be interpreted in four ways: 1) as a lack of capacity; i.e., the child did not have either the physical or mental ability to do what was asked of him; 2) as a lack of experience; he had not been exposed to a similar

situation or the concepts needed to perform the task requested; 3) as a lack of general motivation or drive; and 4) as resistance or negativism; in this situation the child was motivated not to do what was requested. Bridges (1925) suggested that negativism usually resulted from a "just revolt in the beginning against an unreasonable, harsh, or intrusive authority." Negativism might merely be considered a display of the will, a resentment toward a parent or element in the environment, or a means of getting attention (Jenkins, 1935).

Resistance is generally viewed by the various investigators as a refusal on the part of the child to do what is requested of him. The fact that the child is capable of performing the requested task but merely refuses to cooperate has led to research on the development and frequency of this type of behavior.

Ontogeny of Resistant Behavior

Ausubel (1950) describes negativism as a phase of ego development in which the child has a "need for relinquishing the earlier grandiose and omnipotent scheme of ego organization in favor of the satellizing role (i.e., the child identifies in a dependent position with the dominant parental figure) of later childhood." During infancy a form of "infantile egoism" develops in which all of the infant's

psychological and biological needs are immediately and unconditionally satisfied.

His only experience with reality has been with parents who are generally willing and able to cater to his needs. Once the child is able to start doing things for himself, his child-centered world soon diminishes. The child learns of the omnipotence of his parents and that "the essential quality of his impotence [helplessness] is volitional and not executive[1] in nature and that the condition for continued gratification of his needs lies in conformity to parental demands." This change in ego status results in ego devaluation and leads to the subsequent negativism displayed in young children between the ages of two and four years.

Gesell (1943) attributes the origin of negativistic behavior to an incapacity for voluntary choice at the transitional stage of development in which "life becomes charged with double alternatives. Instead of following one line he follows two and one of them seems obstinate to the observer. It is the developmental method by which he learns opposites . . . . He is learning to make one choice by exercising two." Jersild (1947) interpreted negativism as a child's effort to achieve self-help and independence and only incidentally as a form

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[1]Executive refers to the actual manipulative activity involved in the satisfication of desires in contradistinction to the volitional aspect of willing them satisfied.

of opposition to others. "Somewhere between the ages of two and four, children acquire a newly won degree of strength, skills and initiative [which makes them prone to assert themselves] that is simply not supported by a comparable mastery of the social pattern of permissions and taboos" (Cameron, 1947).

Although some research has been conducted on negativism very little has been directed toward the ontogeny of resistant behavior. Levy and Tulchin (1923, 1925) described various types of resistant behavior characteristic of certain age groups, but no one has reported a detailed investigation of the development of resistant behavior. Much of the empirical research on negativism attempted to determine the onset of negativism and its peaks, the relationship of negativism to intelligence and sex differences, and the effects of negativism on intelligence tests and various other tasks. Levy (1925) and Levy and Tulchin (1923, 1925) reported that resistance began at six months and reached its peak around thirty to thirty-five months. The earliest type of resistance around six to seven months was crying and clinging which usually decreased with age, giving away to more complex reactions such as speech and head shaking.

The crying and clinging to the mother witnessed by Levy and Tulchin may be merely components of attachment behavior (Bowlby, 1969). Between the age of six and seven months and sometimes continuing

throughout the second year and into the third the child becomes attached to his mother-figure. At this time he views strangers with caution, and may become alarmed and withdraw if approached too rapidly or if placed in close contact with the stranger. Usually after about three years of age the earlier phase is followed by a period when the child forms what Bowlby calls a "goal-corrected partnership" with the mother-figure. The child learns that mother is not an independent object and that her behavior is determined by various other variables and motives. This period is similar to that described by Ausubel in his discussion of negativism and ego development. For the child this is a transitional period when he is aware of the feelings of others. It is during this time, between two and four years of age, that most children display the greatest amount of resistant behavior. The child develops a more complex relationship with its mother-figure and learns how to influence and manipulate her behavior.

The above theories which postulate the onset of negativism have been supported by some empirical research. Caille (1933) observed 18-45 month old children during free play and found that the peak of resistance occurred between 36 and 38 months of age. Physical resistance and crying tended to decrease with age, while vocal resistance tended to increase. The fact that the child is just beginning to acquire a vocabulary and cannot yet express his desires verbally may

explain her findings. Mayer's findings (1934) tended to support Caille, in that the greatest amount of negativism occurred at three years. In contrast to the above findings Reynolds (1928) reported that negativism reached its peak at two years and decreased with age.

Sex Differences

According to Levy (1925) and Levy and Tulchin (1923, 1925) males show the greatest amount of resistance around 30 months as compared to 18 months for females. They also reported withdrawal reactions and resistance to be more frequent in girls and clinging to the mother to be more frequent in boys. Overall, girls were more resistant than boys for every age except 30 months. Caille (1933) found boys to be more resistant than girls. Goodenough (1929) found boys were slightly more negativistic, but among the lower social classes the girls were more negativistic. The contradiction may be explained by the fact that in the Levy and Levy and Tulchin studies the population was taken from a lower socio-economic class. Several other factors may have influenced their results. For example, all subjects were given the same task regardless of age. This means that the task may have been more difficult and frustrating for some subjects than for others, thereby contributing to the differences in resistant behavior. Moreover, younger subjects may not have

understood what was required of them which may have caused more negativism. Another factor which might have influenced Levy and Tulchin's results was the fact that the study was conducted in a booth during a county fair with various noises going on outside! Although the above factors may have contributed to the differences in the two studies both researchers described negativism generally as a refusal to cooperate.

Effects of Resistance on Performance

Most of the research on resistance was conducted in the early 1920's and 1930's. The investigators' primary concern was with the effects of resistance on performance on intelligence tests, many of which were being developed and perfected during this period. Many children were penalized by refusals to respond which appeared negativistic, so researchers were interested in why a child would not perform a task. Later child development assessment instruments allowed for refusals and the child was no longer penalized. As a result of the improved instruments much of the research on negativism decreased. Why the child becomes resistant around 2 years of age and then relinquishes this behavior around 3 or 4 years has yet to be fully explored.

The relationship of negativism to intelligence was investigated by Reynolds (1928) and Caille (1933) but no significant correlation was found. In contrast to their findings, Rust (1929) and

Nelson (1932) both reported a negative relationship between intelligence and negativism; Cowan et al. (1965) found autistic children who complied initially and those who easily relinquished negativism to have higher IQ scores than children who tended to remain negative. The poor performance on intelligence tests and other tasks as a function of negativism might be explained in terms of what Patterson et al. (1968) described as negative set. "Negative set" is operationally defined as the effect which social stimuli have on the child's behavior. They hypothesized that a child with a strong negative set would attend less frequently to the behavior of a model, usually an adult, and therefore would not acquire the desired behavior. If, however, the model's behaviors were observed by the child then matching behaviors would tend not to follow. A delayed reaction might ensue resulting in a performance which would not be altered until the model was absent. Another alternative would be a child who consistently mismatched the behavior of the model (i.e., did the opposite of the model). Patterson et al. (1968) observed their subjects in a modeling situation and all hypotheses were supported. They also concluded that negative set was most likely to occur in settings that were highly structured and in which the subjects had previously indicated consistent preference for response. Levy and Tulchin (1923, 1925), Nelson (1931), and Rust (1931) found that the intelligence testing situation usually brought about resistance.

Levy and Tulchin (1923) concluded that the manifestation of resistance by infants and children during mental tests was evidence of some innate behavior pattern. Subsequent investigations lend more support for resistance as being socially learned. Evidence of variation in negative behavior associated with sex differences (Maccoby, 1966; Caille, 1933, and Digman, 1963) and with social class differences (Goodenough, 1929) strongly challenge the biological position taken by Levy and Tulchin. Increasingly the influence of specific interactional patterns and of situations upon the negativism of the child have come to be the focus of concern.

Stability of Resistant Behavior

How stable is resistant behavior displayed by preschool children? Various investigators have reported that persons tend to maintain consistent patterns of interaction in social situations (Bell and French, 1950; Hanfmann, 1935; Matarazzo, Saslow, and Guze, 1956; and Matarazzo, Saslow and Matarazzo, 1956). Mayer (1934) stated that the number of instances of negative reactions at one examining period were likely to be similar in subsequent periods. Reynolds (1928) also found a general trend for a child to remain either cooperative or noncooperative during various tasks. However, Gellert (1962), in her investigation of the stability and fluctuation in the power relationships of

young children did not find stable resistant behavior patterns. She did however observe stable patterns with regards to dominant and submissive behaviors. Her subjects ranged in age from 46 to 62 months which may account for her findings since this was an age range in which most investigators reported the amount of resistance had diminished. Moreover, Gellert (1961) suggested that perhaps her procedure should have included more than 3-20 minute play sessions in order to establish a stable level of resistance for each subject.

Resistance appears to be an unstable behavior which varies from one situation to the next. This leaves the investigator unable to predict or measure exactly what causes or influences this behavior. "If observations of social behavior are to be used in assessing personality the degree of stability to be expected with regards to the behavior dimensions sampled becomes important. Particularly in the assessment of individual and group differences among the very young measures are frequently based upon direct observation" (Gellert, 1961).

In summary, various theories have hypothesized why resistant behavior appears around 2 years of age and then diminishes. The explanations range from rebellion against authority to innate behavior patterns. The age of onset of negativism and one type of situation (a structured setting) producing resistance have been established. Few investigators have actually explored the ontogeny of resistance.

Most of the research on resistance was conducted during the 20's and 30's and dealt with its effect on performance on intelligence tests. To date, very little has been done to reveal what causes resistant behavior, what types of tasks produce resistance or why resistance is exhibited as a result of a particular situation. The present investigation attempted to shed some light on a few of these problems.

CHAPTER II

RATIONALE FOR THE INVESTIGATION

On the basis of the previous overview of theory and research on resistant behavior, a rationale will now be presented for the hypotheses developed for this investigation.

Relationship between Condition and Resistant Behavior

The work of Levy and Tulchin (1923, 1925), Nelson (1931) and Rust (1931) revealed that resistant behavior was more likely to occur in a highly structured setting such as an intelligence testing situation. The conclusions drawn by Patterson et al. (1968) indicated that "negative set" was most likely to occur in highly structured settings. These findings suggest the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Subjects in the more highly structured teacher-directed activity will display more resistant behaviors than subjects in the less structured teacher-initiated activity.

Relationship between Sex and Resistance

The work of Baumrind (1971) on patterns of parental authority and its effect on personality development in preschool children sheds some light on sex differences in resistance patterns. She reported that boys showed more hostility to peers, more resistance to adult supervision, and less achievement orientation than girls. She argues that independence is more difficult to achieve for girls than boys and probably requires, even at this young age, a certain amount of rejection of peer and adult influence, and training in true independence according to normative standards. Maccoby (1966) concurs with Baumrind's assertions. She maintains that girls are more conforming, more suggestible and more dependent upon the opinion of others than are boys. Consequently, the child who feels a need for affiliation--that is, seeks approval and is basically dependent on his parents or an adult figure--is less likely to display negativistic behaviors. Digman (1963) and Hattwick (1937) reported that boys showed significantly more negativistic behaviors than girls. In addition, Caille (1933) and Goodenough (1929) found boys to be more resistant than girls. The results of work by Levy (1925) and Levy and Tulchin (1923, 1925) revealed males of thirty months to be more resistant than females of this age. Moreover, Pedersen and Bell (1970) found imitation of

adult models was significantly higher for females while males showed a higher degree of passive nonconformity. Although the above authors use different terminology to describe the behaviors observed, the concepts are basically the same. They are referring to the refusal of the child to respond to the requests or behaviors of an adult.

In a situation in which the behaviors of an experimenter are to be imitated, the following hypothesis was formulated:

Hypothesis II: Boys will display more resistant behaviors than girls.

Relationship between Teacher Ratings and Resistant Behavior

Digman (1963) used teacher ratings as a measure of personality dimensions in early childhood. He concluded that the use of teacher's judgments represents a valid starting point for the exploration of child personality structure. Nursery school teacher's ratings were used by Hattwick (1937) to explore sex differences in behavior of young children. Although Reynolds (1933) asserts that teacher ratings are not good predictors of resistant behavior, the author believes that with an improved rating scale the following hypothesis will hold true:

Hypothesis III: Subjects rated as uncooperative by their teachers will display more resistant behavior than subjects rated as cooperative.

Purpose of the Present Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the amount of resistant behavior displayed by toddlers in a teacher-initiated versus a teacher-directed activity. A second purpose was to determine sex differences in the amount of resistant behavior displayed by toddlers. A third purpose was to determine whether teachers' ratings are predictive of the amount of resistance displayed by toddlers.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects (Ss) were 29 children (14 females and 15 males) enrolled in the MSU Toddler Enrichment Program. Subjects ranged in age from 20 to 40 months (Mean age = 28.75). Five (3 males and 2 females) Ss refused to cooperate with the Experimenter (E) and were excluded from the sample. Of these, only three were rated as uncooperative by their teacher. Of those remaining in the study, 4 (3 males and 1 female) were rated as uncooperative.

Observers

A total of 4 observers were trained for approximately one hour. The sex composition of the observers was 1 male and 3 females. All were students at Michigan State University; 2 were graduate students and 2 were undergraduates. Each observer was trained in the use of the equipment and given a list of the types of behaviors to be observed. Prior to the actual testing situation each observer was familiarized with the procedure and the manner for recording resistant behavior.

Apparatus

The apparatus was an Esterline-Angus event recorder used to record the occurrences of resistant behavior. All sessions were conducted in a playroom with the observers viewing from an area adjacent to the testing area.

Materials available in the playroom were a round child-size table and two chairs, a blank felt face attached to an 11" X 14" felt sheet, cutout felt figures of eyes, nose, mouth and ears, a set of 9, one-inch colorful building blocks, and a form board taken from the Bayley Scales.

Definitions of Conditions

Teacher-initiated activity--in the teacher-initiated activity the teacher encourages the child to use new materials.

Teacher-directed activity--in the teacher-directed activity the child is asked to follow specific directions.

Definitions of Resistance

Resistance will be generally defined as any refusal to cooperate. Three major categories of resistant behavior, active

resistance, passive resistance, and vocal resistance, were scored. The types of behaviors included in each major category were as follows.

Active resistance--any refusal to respond to a given demand or request in a physical manner such as hitting, pushing, or running away.

Running away--moving away from the situation rapidly.

Hitting--striking at the E with fists, hands, or objects.

Throwing--sending any object through the air by a rapid motion of the arm.

Pushing--pressing against the E or another S as if trying to move them.

Walking away--moving away from the situation either slowly or at a moderate speed.

Kicking--striking out at the E with the foot.

Passive resistance--any refusal to comply to a given demand or request by ignoring the situation, remaining silent, or turning away.

Ignoring--S continues doing what he is doing, he pays no attention to the requests made or actions directed towards him.

Silence--S stops what he is doing and makes no verbal response to E.

Turning away--S turns his body away from the stimulus.

Turning head--S only turns his head away from the stimulus.

Vocal resistance--any refusal to comply to a given request or demand by means of verbal protests such as "I won't," "No!" . . .

Crying--any loud vocalizations accompanied by the production and/or flowing of tears.

Screaming--any form of loud, shrill vocalizations without the presence of tears.

Verbal protests--any words used to indicate refusal to perform a task or in protest of objects being taken away, etc.

Fussing--any form of whining without actually crying, screaming, or verbally protesting.

Procedure

All subjects (Ss) were rated by their teacher as being cooperative or uncooperative along a 5-point scale. (See Appendix for

rating scale.) None of the Ss were rated 1. Therefore S was considered uncooperative if a rating of 2 or 3 was given. Ss were classified as cooperative if the rating was either 4 or 5.

Ss were randomly divided into 2 groups: 12 Ss (6 males and 6 females) received the teacher-initiated activity (Condition A) and 12 received the teacher-directed activity (Condition B). The procedure was similar to that used by Reynolds (1928) and took approximately 9 minutes.

The experimenter (E) went to the play area and with the approval of the teacher selected a subject. E then said to S, "Come on (child's name), let's go play some games." E chatted with S and together they proceeded to the examining area. When E and S sighted the form board E said, "See the board and blocks over there, let's go over and play with them." E tried to entice S to the table to be seated. As soon as the child entered the room the observer started the event recorder. Two observers recorded the behaviors at all times. Three buttons of the recorder corresponded to the three major categories of resistant behavior. When S refused to perform any of the requested tasks the observer pressed the button which deflected the pen of the recorder. Each observer continued to press the button until the behavior ceased. For any passive resistance ten seconds was allowed following the request before the observer depressed the button.

The sessions were terminated if at the end of 5 minutes E could not persuade S to do any of the tasks or S began to fuss or cry and could not be quieted after 2 minutes.

Situation 1: Form Board

E tried to get S to place each form on the board. The form board was put in front of the child and the figures were placed at the bottom of the board. E then said to S:

Condition A--"Would you like to play with these figures?" "Do you think they will fit on this board?" "Would you like to place them on the board?" S chose any form and after each form was picked up E would say, "Where would you like to place that?"

Condition B--"Now, I'd like you to place each form where it should go." E picked up the circle (square, triangle) and said, "See, this is a circle and it will fit in a round hole like this one. (E pointed to the round hole.) "Place the circle where it should go." E followed the same procedure for the square and the triangle.

Situation 2: Making a Face

A blank face was glued to an 11" X 14" felt rectangle and felt eyes, ears, nose, and mouth were placed in front of the child. S was requested to place the cutouts on the face. E said:

Condition A--"Would you like to play with these figures?" "Do you think they belong on this face?" S chose any figure and after each figure was picked up E said "Where would you like to place that one?"

Condition B--"Now I'd like you to place each figure where it should go." E picked up the eye and said, "See, this is an eye and it should go here. (E pointed to the eye area.) Place the eye where it should go." E gave the figure to S. E followed the same procedure for each figure.

Situation 3: Blocks

A box of blocks were emptied on the table in front of the child. E attempted to get the child to build a tower of six blocks, knock it down and rebuild it. E said:

Condition A--"See the pretty blocks. Do you think you can make a big tower by putting one block on top of another?" E demonstrated by placing one block on top of another block. "See, would you like to build a real big tower?" Once S completed the tower E said, "What do you think will happen if you that that block out? Would you like to take it out and see what happens?" "Go ahead, you may take it out if you like." After the child

toppled the tower E said "Wow! It all fell down. Would you like to build it again?" E used the same procedure as above to get S to rebuild the tower.

Condition B--"I want you to make a tower just like this." E built a six block tower and then knocked it down. "Now, you make one just like the one I made." "That's right make one just like mine." After S completed the tower E said, "Now, knock it down just like I did. That's right, just knock it down." After S knocked down the tower E said, "Now, let's build another one. That's right, just stack the blocks."

Situation 4: Leaving

Once S rebuilt the tower E said, "We're not going to knock this one down."

Condition A--"We've finished playing with the blocks and it's time for us to go. Would you like to go back upstairs?" If S refused E said, "Wouldn't you like to come with me?"

Condition B--"We've finished playing with the blocks, now you must go back upstairs." E took S's hand and went upstairs.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed by means of analysis of variance. A 2 X 2 factorial design (sex X condition) was used. The dependent variable was resistance as measured by the frequency of occurrence in each condition. Predictability of teachers' ratings were determined by means of a t-test.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Observer Agreement

A total of four observers were used with two observers observing at all times. Observer reliability was determined by means of the Pearson product-moment correlation (r) for between ratings of two observers for each of five, two-hour testing sessions. Inter-observer reliabilities for the frequency of resistant behavior ranges from .83 to .99 (mean r = .93).

Experimental Findings: Tests of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I predicted that subjects in the more highly structured teacher-directed activity would display more resistant behaviors than subjects in the less structured teacher-initiated activity. An analysis of variance (see Table 1) for resistant behavior revealed no significant main effects. Examination of the means in Table 2 suggests that the teacher-initiated activity tended to produce more resistant behavior than the teacher-directed activity.

The results not only rejected the hypothesis but tended to suggest the opposite.

No significant differences were found between males and females in either of the conditions. Inspection of the means (see Table 2) revealed that there was a tendency for males to be more resistant than females in the teacher-directed condition and less resistant in the teacher-initiated condition.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that teacher ratings would be indicative of the amount of resistant behavior displayed by the subjects. Due to the small number of subjects rated as uncooperative by their teachers only males were used in this analysis. Although the mean resistant score for uncooperative males (14.67/n = 3) tended to be higher than that for cooperative males (9.44/n = 9), these mean scores were not significantly different ($t = 1.10$, $df = 11$).

Additional Findings

A 2 X 2 X 3 analysis of variance for resistant behavior (see Table 3) was computed using sex, condition and type of resistance as the main factors. A significant main effect was found for the type of resistance displayed by the toddlers. Inspection of the means indicated that passive resistance was displayed more often than either active or vocal resistance. (See Table 4.) Further analysis revealed

a significant difference between the amount of passive resistance as compared with active and vocal resistance ($t = 3.23$, $df = 46$, $p < .005$; $t = 2.25$, $df = 46$, $p < .025$).

A significant three-way sex X condition X type of resistance interaction was found. Table 4 shows the mean resistance for each sex, condition, and type. A Duncan Multiple Range Test indicated that males were more vocally resistant in the teacher-directed condition and females more vocally resistant in the teacher-initiated condition.

Summary of Results

In general, the results did not support any of the hypotheses. There was a tendency for Ss to be more resistant in the teacher-initiated activity which rejected hypothesis 1. In fact, the opposite effect was suggested. The findings suggested that males are more resistant than females and teacher ratings are predictive of the amount of resistant behavior displayed by the children, though these comparisons were not statistically significant.

The following results while not predicted were found to be significant: subjects displayed more passive resistant behaviors than either active or vocal resistance. Males were more vocally resistant in the teacher-directed condition while females were more vocally resistant in the teacher-initiated condition.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study suggest that the manner in which a task is presented does not affect the amount of resistant behavior produced by young children. Contrary to the findings of other researchers (Levy and Tulchin, 1923, 1925; Nelson, 1931; and Rust, 1931) who reported more resistance in a highly structured setting the results of this study imply the opposite. In this study young children tended to be more resistant in the teacher-initiated condition than in the teacher-directed condition.

Rust (1931) reported a positive correlation between the difficulty of the test and the amount of resistance displayed. The tasks required of the children in this study were in the realm of their capabilities which may account for the lack of differentiation in the two conditions. Also, in the teacher-directed condition it was apparent to the child what was expected of him, in contrast to the teacher-initiated condition in which the child had to figure out what was required. These findings were consistent with those obtained by Prescott (1973). She conducted a study comparing behaviors of

children in different day care settings. When compared with children in a closed structure center, a family day care center, and a home-plus nursery school, children in an open structured center were highest in what she termed "active rejection." Children in a closed structured center rated highest in meeting adult expectations.

The resistance displayed by young children may not be an effort to achieve independence as interpreted by Jersild (1947) or the result of ego devaluation caused by a change in ego status as described by Ausubel (1950). The resistance may merely be a product of a lack of experience on the part of the child or simply the inability to understand or to do what was requested (Cowan et al., 1965).

The task which seemed to produce the most resistance in this study was situation three which required the child to act contrary to his expectations. Gesell (1943) described this transitional period as a time when the child is unable to modulate his behavior; he wants things "done the accustomed way." In task three the child must inhibit his response and not knock down the tower. Gesell maintains that the nerve cell organization which presides over inhibition is poorly developed, thus making it even more difficult for the child to inhibit his response. The work of Luria (1961) gives added support for this assumption. He argues that verbal instructions may initiate required movements in the child at the beginning of his second year of

life, but the influence of this speech-function is limited. Speech is quite useless when it conflicts with an action already begun. At this early age the initiating function of speech is already developed but its inhibitory function has not yet been defined.

Further analysis of the results showed that there were no significant sex differences in total resistance. Table 2 suggests that there was a slight tendency for boys to have higher total resistance scores than girls. Nelson reported differences between the sexes to be negligible with respect to resistance. Goodenough reported that the mean rating for negativism was higher for the boys than for the girls at every age. On further analysis of the data, Goodenough found that no consistent differences in negativism existed between the girls of one social class as compared with another, whereas among the boys the greater amount of resistance was found among the upper social classes. In comparing her results with those obtained by Levy and Tulchin, in which the girls were said to be more resistant than the boys at every age except the thirtieth month, Goodenough makes the point that the subjects used in the Levy and Tulchin study were obtained almost entirely from the lower occupational classes, the class from which the least resistant children of her study came.

In the present study, the subjects were from a college population, being children of both professors and college students. The

results were not significant and therefore did not substantiate Goodenough's findings or those of Levy and Tulchin.

The rating scale was limited in its assessment of resistant behavior. There was a tendency for children rated as uncooperative to be more resistant than those rated as cooperative. This difference was so small that it could be easily attributed to chance. These results tended to support Reynolds' contention that the rating scale is limited as a criterion for resistance. Perhaps a more detailed rating scale should have been used. Digman suggests a number of judgments should be ordered along a minimum of 7 dimensions.

In general, the failure to find significant differences in the sample population may be attributed to the small number of subjects rated as uncooperative. The group of children may be basically less resistant than the population sample of other experiments. Therefore, the restricted range of cooperation may in fact "mask" the effects of the other variables (i.e., sex, condition, and rating scale).

The significant findings of this study were unexpected ones. The children displayed more instances of passive resistance than either active or vocal resistance. This may be attributed to the lack of an adequate vocabulary on the part of the younger subjects. The room presented no distractions which would lead the children to actively move about thereby inhibiting their active resistance. In addition,

forms of aggression such as kicking, hitting, and pushing are discouraged at the Enrichment Program.

It would appear that when males are put in a teacher-directed setting they tend to vocalize more than females who tend to be more passive. In the teacher-initiated activity females vocalize more than males who also show more passive resistance. These findings were contrary to those of Pedersen and Bell (1970) who reported males showed more passive nonconformity when required to imitate the behaviors of an adult model.

It is a frequent finding that females are more passive and dependent in many settings than comparable groups of males (Ausubel, 1958). In the teacher-directed condition of the present study the requests were made in the form of an order and Adams (1967) stated that "suggestions usually produce compliance whereas, orders produce obedience." The females in the teacher-directed condition seem to be more obedient than the males. Ausubel described children between eighteen and 42 months as follows: "Girls apparently manifest less negativism at this age than boys because they see themselves as more accepted and intrinsically valued by parents and have a more available like-sexed person with whom to identify; they can acquire more derived status." Therefore, in the teacher-directed situation, in order to please or be accepted the girls were less likely to actively resist

resist than the boys. In the teacher-initiated activity the girls possibly felt freer to vocalize their protests because the request was made in the form of a suggestion and not an order. The boys in the teacher-directed activity may have interpreted the orders as an infringement on their independence and therefore felt a need to verbally express their independence.

Implications for Future Research

The manner in which a request was made did not significantly effect the amount of resistant behavior displayed by young children. These findings could be attributed to the small sample population or to a need for a longer testing period. It is therefore suggested that in future studies the number of subjects and the length of the testing session be increased to find possible differences in the manner of presentation.

Since there was only a small number of subjects in this study in each age more attention should be devoted to developmental trends in resistant behaviors. The author would hypothesize that the amount of resistance would reach its peak around 2 years of age and then begin to decline.

In this investigation differences were found in the types of resistant behaviors displayed. Further attempts should be made to

establish why one type of resistant behavior is displayed more often than another. It would also be interesting to determine whether different types of resistant behaviors were displayed at different ages or in different situations.

Tasks which were contrary to the child's expectations appeared to produce more resistant behaviors than tasks the child was familiar with, suggesting an effect of type or task related to children's perceptions of task demands. It would be beneficial to establish what kinds of requests, demands or tasks produced the most resistance.

The present research revealed no significant differences in the two contrived conditions. This may be possibly because the two conditions were not different enough to produce the desired results. It would be of interest to investigate the amount of resistance in young children in a naturalistic setting, such as a day care center, or to compare different types of day care centers and the frequency of resistance produced in each one.

TABLE 1

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF AMOUNT OF RESISTANT BEHAVIOR AS A FUNCTION OF SEX AND CONDITION

Source	df	MS	F	P
Total	23			
Sex (A)	1	60.16	1.10	n.s.
Condition (B)	1	23.99	.44	n.s.
A X B	1	60.19	1.10	n.s.
Error	20	54.55		

TABLE 2

MEAN RESISTANT BEHAVIOR BY SEX AND CONDITION

Condition	Sex		Grand Mean
	Male	Female	
Teacher-Directed	11.33	5.00	8.17
Teacher-Initiated	10.16	10.16	10.16
Grand Mean	10.75	7.58	

TABLE 3

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF AMOUNT OF RESISTANT BEHAVIOR AS A FUNCTION OF SEX, CONDITION, AND TYPE

Source	df	MS	F
Total	73		
Sex (A)	1	21.13	1.88
Condition (B)	1	8.68	.77
Type (C)	2	67.62	6.03*
A X B	1	23.34	2.08
A X C	2	8.04	.71
B X C	2	11.76	1.05
A X B X C	2	55.56	4.96**
Error	62	11.20	

*$p < .005$
**$p < .025$

TABLE 4

MEAN RESISTANT BEHAVIOR BY SEX, CONDITION, AND TYPE OF RESISTANCE

Condition	Male			Female			Grand Mean
	Vocal	Passive	Active	Vocal	Passive	Active	
Teacher-Directed	5.16	4.33	2.16	.50	3.83	.66	2.77
Teacher-Initiated	.16	8.16	2.00	3.83	3.83	2.83	3.46
Grand Mean	2.66	6.24	2.08	2.16	3.83	1.74	

APPENDIX

LETTERS TO PARENTS

RATING SCALE

Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48823
Department of Psychology, Olds Hall

May 22, 1973

To parents of children at the MSU Toddler Enrichment Program:

We are interested in conducting a study at the MSU Toddler Enrichment Program this Spring. The general topic of our research is the development of resistant behavior in young children. The particular question we want to answer is, will a child be more willing to perform a task if he's allowed to do the task on his own with very little direction from an adult?

We would like to begin our work early next week, and we would like to have your child participate. The research session will not last more than about 20 minutes, and we will schedule those sessions, after consultation with the teacher, so that the children will not miss special events planned by the class. Each child, if he or she participates, will participate only once.

We would like to stress that we take all necessary means to insure the privacy of each child who participates. This means that the records of all individual observations are kept strictly confidential, not only from the children but also from all other persons not directly associated with the project. In addition we use a name-coded system so that no child's name ever appears with his results.

This project has been approved by the Preschool Committee of the Institute. If you have any questions about the project, or your own child's participation, please call Dr. Kuipers, Acting Director of the Institute, at 353-3717, or call either of us at the Department of Psychology.

Yours sincerely,

Hiram E. Fitzgerald
Associate Professor of Psychology
412 Baker Hall (353-3933)

Freida Brown
Graduate Assistant in Developmental Psychology
112B Olds Hall (355-9561)

RATING SCALE

Name of Child_____ Sex_____
Rater_____ Age_____
Date_____
School_____

Directions: Please indicate which statement best describes the above child.

5____ Very cooperative. Adapts readily and easily to demands placed on him.

4____

3____ Reasonably cooperative, but often maintains his original behavior.

2____

1____ Uncooperative. Very unresponsive to demands. Cannot shift.

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