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### **Differences in the male response to children's toys and games in various groups**

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The Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are categorized as a neurodevelopmental disorder in which an individual demonstrates abnormalities in social development, communication, and in restricted patterns of behaviours and interests from very early ages. This implies the consideration of different theoretical, methodological, and practical positions that contribute to advance our understanding of the phenomenon. According to one of them the autism implies a disorder of empathy, allied to an average capacity or even superior of systematization, which would bring, as consequence, a brain extremely masculine. This study aimed to verify whether the children with ASD present differences regarding the formation of gender identity compared in children with typical development, and in children with Mental Retardation. The empirical study was developed as a cross-sectional design, with a sample of 99 male children and aged four to six years and 6 months, from cities of the states of Sao Paulo and Bahia. This sample was divided into three groups, considering their clinical features: Control group – children in typical development (n=33); Clinical group – children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders – ASD (n=33) and Clinical group – children with Mental Retardation – RM (n=33). The instruments used were the Assessment Scale of Autistic Traits – ATA, the Columbia Mental Maturity Scale and the Gender Apperception Test – GAT. Significant differences were identified in the results provided by the three groups regarding the gender acquisition, with the Control Group presenting a higher score in masculine items, followed by the group with TEA and then the MR group. The identified differences are directly related to the clinical features of the children that composed the groups. Furthermore, the ASD group besides not having obtained the best performance, in relation to control group, it also presented differences as to the process of the gender identity acquisition when compared to the MR group.