

## Female Tenderness in Children's Literature: A Content Analysis of Gender Depiction in Greek Preschool Picture Books

**Authors :** Theopoula Karanikolaou

**Abstract :** During recent decades an increasing number of studies indicate the negative impact of gender stereotypes in various aspects of society as well as in everyday life. At the same time, children's literature is considered an important factor of gender-role socialization as it provides young readers with socially accepted gender behavioral models. Using a content analysis approach, this research examines the female representations in Greek children's literature published from 2009 to 2019. Results indicate that female characters are depicted as sensitive and tender both in texts and illustrations, traits that are almost absent in the male characters of the sample. Highlighting the emotional aspect of female characters in contrast with the restrained male attitude reproduces gender biases. Stereotypical gender representation in children's literature cultivates further discrimination among men and women.

**Keywords :** children's literature, female representation, gender socialization, gender studies

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