

7.1: In the Spotlight

When you think of LEGO, you may imagine a child building a spaceship or castle, but LEGO wanted to learn more about how children are encouraged or discouraged to play with its bricks. In 2021, LEGO launched a research study of close to 7,000 parents and children aged 6 to 14 in seven countries to determine how gender stereotypes influence play in creative activities.

During this study, LEGO learned that girls are more open to bending gender roles than boys but that parents have learned to stereotype some careers as being gender specific. Additionally, parents are more likely to encourage girls to play dress-up (83% for girls, 17% for boys), dance (81% for girls, 15% for boys), and bake (80% for girls, 20% for boys), while they suggest computer coding (71% for boys, 29% for girls) and sports for boys (76% for boys, 24% for girls). Based on these findings, LEGO initiated its “Ready for Girls” campaign.



Figure 7.1 Marketing research provides companies with data-driven insights that allow for deep understanding of their customers to develop products and services that meet those customers’ needs. (credit: modification of work “Workshop: Biodiversity Data Mobilization - Day 3” by Maheva Bagard Laursen/GBIF/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

The data compiled in this study allowed LEGO to take a step forward in helping to break down some gender norms regarding its product. On October 11, 2021, the International Day of the Girl, LEGO announced a new program to encourage girls to show their creativity. “Get the World Ready for Me” was launched with a 10-step guide to collect information about how girls are engaging with LEGO. As a result of this program, LEGO has launched a campaign of stories about how girls are involved with imagination and creativity.

Through this campaign, LEGO identified a way to encourage girls to challenge worldwide views of gender norms (see Figure 7.2). The background necessary for this campaign was researched and used to help the company stand out. For LEGO and many other companies and organizations, research is a competitive advantage (LEGO, 2021).



Figure 7.2 Through marketing research, LEGO was able to gain data-driven insights into gender stereotypes and launch a campaign that encouraged girls to challenge views on gender norms. (credit: “LEGO Shuttle Expedition and City Spaceport Comparison” by Adam Purves (S3ISOR)/flickr, CC BY 2.0)

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