Introduction and objectives

The discussion of gender issues in design practice, or in design research is still in its infancy (Ehrnberger, Räsänen, & Ilstedt, 2012). Gender equality and equity in design is often highlighted, but it often results in producing designs that highlight the differences between men and women, although both the needs and characteristics vary more between individuals than between genders (Hyde, 2005). Women have been involved in design history in a variety of ways, but consistently ignored, but their influence on design has been systematically discouraged (Buckley, 1986). The aim of this study is to prove that these theories apply also to the market of hand tools.

Below the main objectives of the study are described:

- To analyze the influence of gender on the design of hand tools.
- To analyze the influence of the design of hand tools on the development of gender roles.
- To integrate sex and gender variables in the design methodology.
- To apply this gender inclusive methodology to the design of a screwdriver.

Methodology

This poster presents the analysis phase of the Case Study. Two workshops were held with 6 female and 6 male users separated to analyze hand tools in the market. The users were asked to classify the tools according to the sex that the tool was designed for. The users were also asked to identify ten features that they value when using a tool and how often they use them. The authors will develop a gender inclusive design methodology in future works.

References


Results

The classifications made by each group coincided. Aesthetic codes are well known by both sexes, few doubts arose only with neutral designs that the female and male groups sometimes considered being designed for their sex.

The characteristics asked by the users were again very similar, but the masculine or neutral designs seemed to be better able to meet them. Female designs were described as fragile and non-professional.

From these results it can be suggested that companies approach female market through pinking their products and designs. They apply stereotypic codes instead of taking into account the real needs of women.