

Impact of Birth Order and Parenting Style on Personality

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ABSTRACT

Birth order refers to the order a child is born in a family. Parental Authority Style are the ways or methods that parents use to exercise their authority over their children. Common styles include authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. Personality is the set of traits, behaviours, attitude and patterns of thought processes that characterizes an individual and influence how they interact with the world around them. The aim of the study is to assess the impact of birth order (first born and last born) and Parental Authority styles on personality. A total of 100 young adults aged between 18-35 (male and female) were selected using convenient sampling method. Assessments were done by using NEO FFI by Costa and McCrae, 1992 and Parental Authority Questionnaire by Diana Baumrind, 1960. The analysis was done using descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation and linear regression. The results of this study concludes that individuals with neuroticism trait has negative correlation with authoritative (-.026) authoritarian (-.094) and permissive (-.089) parenting styles, extraversion trait with authoritative parenting style has no significant correlation (.081) whereas permissive parenting style has positive correlation (.263) and with authoritarian parenting style has non-significant but positive correlation (.113). Openness and Agreeableness trait of individuals with authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles has 0.01 level of correlation. Conscientiousness with authoritative has non-significant correlation (.010), with permissive parenting style has significant positive correlation (.240) and with authoritarian parenting style has moderate but non-significant correlation (.173). Authoritative and Authoritarian Parenting Style has weak relationship with the personality traits with variance of 4.6% and 3.7 respectively but permissive parenting style has a moderate relationship with the personality traits with variance of 12.1%.

Keywords: Birth Order, First Born, Last Born, Parental Authority, Authoritarian, Permissive, Authoritative, Parenting, Personality, Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness

Birth order refers to the order of a child born in a family as first born, middle born or the last born. In early 20th century Austrian Psychologist Alfred Adler introduced the idea that birth order could impact development and personality. Adler birth order suggests that first borns get more attention and time from their parents. First borns are often described as leaders, structured and organized, high achieving, mature and responsible. Middle borns are often highly Independent, people pleasers, outgoing, competitive, peace

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makers and adaptable while sometimes they can also have a rebellious streak that tends to emerge when they want to stand apart from their siblings. Last borns of the family are often seen as spoiled and pampered compared to their other siblings as parents become more experienced till then. They are described as outgoing, charming, fun, loving, immature, free spirited, self centred, Dependent and risk takers.

The approach or method that parents use to raise their children are referred as the Parenting Style. In the 1960s, psychologist Diana Baumrind identified three main styles of parenting: authoritarian, authoritative and permissive. Authoritarian parenting style is often described as dictatorial and overbearing. Authoritative Parenting style is generally regarded to be the best parenting style as it provides a balance between structure and independence allowing a child to grow within reasonable boundaries and explore their abilities. Permissive parenting style is the extreme opposite of authoritarian parenting style as it let's the children do what they want and don't implement rules or structure that might disappoint or upset the child, often parents trying to act more as a peer or friend to their child, giving in to their needs immediately.

Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristics behavior and thought (Allport, 1961, p.28). It can be understood in terms of a person's behavior, actions, postures, words, attitudes and opinions. Personality can also be described as an individuals hidden feelings about the external world. Personality development depends on self-awareness, character and conduct, will power, self-confidence, positive thinking, good morals, accountability and acceptance of others feedback especially criticism.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

April Bleske-Rechek, Jenna A Kelley (2014), conducted a within the family test using independent self reports from both first born and last born siblings. Big FIVE personality data was collected on 69 young firstborn -lastborn sibling pairs. They also obtained data from parents of sibling pairs and peer ratings of original participant's personality traits. Within family analysis revealed that neither siblings independent self reported personality traits nor parents reports of their children's personality traits differed systematically as a function of birth order.

Tamanna Gupta (2017), conducted a study exploring the personality trait of different birth orders. Sample of the study consisted 60 college students of different birth order (20 firstborn, middle born and last born). Their age ranged between 17-26 years and education was at least graduation and above. Selected subjects were tested by questionnaire method their psychological dimensions of neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness to assess personality traits. NEO FFI questionnaire was used. Collected data was analysed using ANOVA. Findings reveals that their was significant difference between different birth orders on personality traits.

Stephen Nowicki Jr (1967), examined a group of 1400 patients who had been admitted to the neuropsychiatric wards of a veterans administration hospital over a 7 year period, four groups (only children, first born, middle born and last born) of schizophrenic randomly selected. Each patient had completed a valid Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) and Maudsley Personality Inventory (MPI). Significant differences among the groups were found in 13 of the scales.

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The most striking finding Eastham the middle born group was deviant on many of the scales.

- Suzanne M Phillips(1998), examined a total of 196 introduction to psychology students at a mid sized college campus completed the NEO PI-R , Costa and McCrae's(1987) highly reliable and valid measure of the five major personality dimensions used by Sulloway. Subjects also described their families, including the ages of family members, the number of siblings and whether the siblings were step siblings or not.
- Amaranta D de Haan, Maja Dekovic, Peter Prinzie (2012), conducted a longitudinal study on impact of parent-adolescent relationship. In a large Belgian community sample, it was examined which Big Five characteristics elicited certain parenting behaviors. Results indicated that parental personality was more relevant than adolescent personality for explaining hyperactivity but parent and adolescent personality were similarly relevant in explaining warmth. Especially parental and adolescent Agreeableness and adolescent Extraversion were important predictors of both types of parenting. Associations between parental personality and parenting were similarly related to parents of easy versus difficult adolescents and for mother's and father's parenting daughters or sons.

METHODOLOGY

Aim: To study the impact of birth order and parenting style on personality.

Objectives

- To assess the impact of parenting style on personality
- To find out the in personality of First born and Last born.

Hypothesis

- H0= There is no significant impact of birth order and parenting style on personality.
- H1= There is a significant impact of parenting style on personality
- H2= There is a significant impact of birth order on personality.

Tools

1. **NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) Questionnaire** by Robert R. McCrae and Paul T. Costa Jr.
2. **Parental Authority Questionnaire** by Diana Baumrind

Description of the Test

1. **NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) Questionnaire** by Robert R.McCrae and Paul T. Costa Jr is a widely used questionnaire designed to measure the Big FIVE personality traits allowing researchers and clinicians to assess an individuals personality traits: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. It consists of 60 items with 12 item each of the five personality dimensions. Respondents rate each item on a scale typically ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” indicating to which they agree with the statement about their behavior or feelings. The questionnaire provides scores for each of the five personality traits allowing researchers and clinicians to assess an individuals personality profile.
2. **Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)** by Diana Baumrind is a widely used tool designed to assess different dimensions of parental authority or parental style. It was

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developed in 1960s. It typically consists of statements or items related to parental behavior, attitudes and interactions with their children.

Statistical Analysis: The data was analysed in a software called “SPSS”. Correlation and Regression has been used to assess the impact of birth order and parenting style on personality.

Sample and Sampling: For this study Selective participation and convenient sampling has been used. A total of 110 participants aged between 18-35 participated in this research.

		AUTHORITARIAN/TOTAL	FIRSTSECOND BORN
NEUROTICISM	Pearson Correlation	-.084	.048
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.345	.828
	N	103	103
AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.451	-.043
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.870
	N	103	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.549	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.878
	N	103	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.006
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.954
	N	103	103

FIRSTSECOND BORN	Pearson Correlation	.006	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.954	
	N	103	103

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

		NEUROTICISM	AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	PERMISSIVETOTAL
NEUROTICISM	Pearson Correlation	1	-.026	-.069
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.795	.370
	N	103	103	103
AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.026	1	.533
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.795		.000
	N	103	103	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.069	.533	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.370	.000	
	N	103	103	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.054	.451	.549
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.345	.000	.000
	N	103	103	103
FIRSTSECOND BORN	Pearson Correlation	.048	-.043	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.628	.870	.878
	N	103	103	103

		OPENNESS	AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	PERMISSIVETOTAL
OPENNESS	Pearson Correlation	1	-.129	-.043
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.195	.863
	N	103	103	103
AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.129	1	.533
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.195		.000
	N	103	103	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.043	.533	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.863	.000	
	N	103	103	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.053	.451	.549
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.528	.000	.000
	N	103	103	103
FIRSTSECOND BORN	Pearson Correlation	.006	-.043	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.954	.870	.878
	N	103	103	103

		AUTHORITARIAN/TOTAL	FIRSTSECOND BORN
OPENNESS	Pearson Correlation	-.083	.052
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.525	.821
	N	103	103
AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.451	-.043
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.870
	N	103	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.549	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.878
	N	103	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.006
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.954
	N	103	103

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

		AGREEABLENESS	AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	PERMISSIVETOTAL
AGREEABLENESS	Pearson Correlation	1	.140	-.060
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.157	.548
	N	103	103	103
AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.140	1	.533
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.157		.000
	N	103	103	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.060	.533	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.548	.000	
	N	103	103	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.045	.451	.549
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.648	.000	.000
	N	103	103	103
FIRSTSECOND BORN	Pearson Correlation	-.100	-.043	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.316	.870	.878
	N	103	103	103

		AUTHORITARIAN/TOTAL	FIRSTSECOND BORN
AGREEABLENESS	Pearson Correlation	-.045	-.100
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.648	.316

AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.006	-.043
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.954	.870
	N	103	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.549	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.878
	N	103	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.006
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.954
	N	103	103

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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		EXTRAVERSI ON	AUTHORITATIV ETOTAL	PERMISSIVET OTAL
EXTRAVERSION	Pearson Correlation	.1	.081	.203*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.414	.007
	N	103	103	103
AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.061	1	.533**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000
	N	103	103	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.203**	.533**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.000	
	N	103	103	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.113	.451**	.549**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.258	.000	.000
	N	103	103	103
FIRSTSECONDBORN	Pearson Correlation	.011	-.043	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.915	.870	.878
	N	103	103	103

		AUTHORITARIANTO TAL	FIRSTSECONDBOR N
EXTRAVERSION	Pearson Correlation	.113	.011
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.258	.915
	N	103	103
AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.451	-.043
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.870
	N	103	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.549**	.015**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.878
	N	103	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.006**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.684
	N	103	103

		AUTHORITARIANTO TAL	FIRSTSECONDBOR N
FIRSTSECONDBORN	Pearson Correlation	.006	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.684	
	N	103	103

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

		CONSCIENTIO USNESS	AUTHORITATIV ETOTAL	PERMISSIVET OTAL
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS	Pearson Correlation	1	.010	.240*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.918	.015
	N	103	103	103
AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.010	1	.533**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.918		.000
	N	103	103	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.240*	.533**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.000	
	N	103	103	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.173	.451**	.549**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.081	.000	.000
	N	103	103	103
FIRSTSECONDBORN	Pearson Correlation	-.232	-.043	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.870	.878
	N	103	103	103

Correlations

		AUTHORITARIANTO TAL	FIRSTSECONDBOR N
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS	Pearson Correlation	.173	-.232
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.081	.015
	N	103	103
AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.451	-.043
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.870
	N	103	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.549**	.015**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.878
	N	103	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.006**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.684
	N	103	103
FIRSTSECONDBORN	Pearson Correlation	.006**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.684	
	N	103	103

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression

Authoritarian Parenting Style

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.215 ^a	.046	-.003	8.424

a. Predictors: (Constant), CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, OPENNESS, EXTRAVERSION, AGREEABLENESS, NEUROTICISM

Permissive Parenting Style

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.347 ^a	.121	.075	8.425

a. Predictors: (Constant), CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, OPENNESS, EXTRAVERSION, AGREEABLENESS, NEUROTICISM

Authoritative Parenting Style

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.193 ^a	.037	-.012	8.462

a. Predictors: (Constant), CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, OPENNESS, EXTRAVERSION, AGREEABLENESS, NEUROTICISM

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	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
NEUROTICISM	37.80	7.273	103
EXTRAVERSION	36.55	5.297	103
OPENNESS	38.46	5.856	103
AGREEABLENESS	37.83	5.563	103
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS	40.91	6.363	103
AUTHORITARIANTOTAL	60.99	8.412	103
PERMISSIVETOTAL	63.55	8.761	103
AUTHORITATIVETOTAL	63.48	8.410	103

DISCUSSION

The present study aims to explore the impact of birth order and parenting style on personality. The sample of the study consists of 110 participants in this study belonging to the age of 18-35 years.

Birth order can have an impact on personality development and the patterns can be influenced by parental style approach. The relationship between birth order and parenting style and personality is complex and multifaceted.

According to the results, Neuroticism trait of personality has non-significant and weak correlation with authoritative (-.026), authoritarian (-.094) and permissive (-.089) parenting style. Extraversion with authoritative parenting style has no significant correlation (.081) whereas with permissive parenting style has positive correlation (.263) and with authoritarian parenting style has weak non-significant but positive correlation (.113). Openness with authoritative parenting style has weak non-significant but positive correlation (.129), authoritarian parenting style has weak non-significant negative correlation and with permissive parenting style it has no significant correlation (-.043). Agreeableness with authoritative has weak non-significant positive correlation (.140), and with authoritarian and permissive parenting styles has weak non-significant correlation with values of -.405 and -.060 respectively. Conscientiousness with authoritative has non-significant correlation (.010), with permissive parenting style has significant and positive correlation (.240) and with authoritarian moderate but non-significant correlation (.173). The regression results between authoritative parenting style and the personality traits (R score=0.215, R square =0.046) accounts 4.6% of variance showing a weak relationship between the variables, permissive Parenting Style has 12.1% variance with the personality traits (R score= 0.347, R square =0.121) which indicates a moderate relationship between the two variables and authoritarian parenting style (R score= 0.193 and R square =0.037)accounts for 3.7% variance with the personality traits showing weak relationship between the variables.

The results implies that along with personality traits other factors such as cultural influences, upbringing or situational factors may play more significant role in shaping behaviours.

CONCLUSION

With the help of this research it has helped to understand the impact of birth order and parenting style on personality. There has been found 0.01 level of significant correlation between the parenting style of authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles with Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness and Agreeableness trait of personality showing weak relationship between them. Also, there was 0.05 level of significant correlation with Conscientiousness trait of personality indicating weak but moderate correlation. Also there

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is weak relationship between personality and parenting style of authoritative and authoritarian parenting style with variance of 4.6% and 3.7% respectively and a moderate relationship between the personality traits and permissive parenting style with variance of 12.1%.

Limitations

- Due to limited time the sample size was small.
- The research sampling used was convenience sampling which may not be representative of the broader population.
- Personality traits may have a hereditary component and may not attribute variations solely to parenting practices.
- Most of the participants were students
- Birth order effects may vary on different dynamics such as age, sibling relationship and sibling relationship.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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