

Research Paper

Social and Interpersonal Skills Among Single Child and Children with Siblings

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ABSTRACT

The present study sought to explore differences in social and interpersonal skills between single child and children with siblings through both quantitative measures and qualitative subjective analyses. The quantitative results indicated that although children with siblings scored slightly higher on the Behavioral, Emotional, and Social Skills Inventory (BESSI) and the Interpersonal Skills Assessment, the differences between the two groups were not statistically significant. However, the qualitative thematic analysis of the Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank responses revealed subtle yet meaningful distinctions in how participants described their interpersonal experiences. Single child expressed greater concerns related to trust, self-image, autonomy, and anxiety, whereas children with siblings more frequently emphasized themes of family support, social communication, ambition, and emotional regulation. The subjective narratives highlighted that although skill levels may not differ significantly in standardized tests, the qualitative experiences of social and interpersonal relationships vary notably between the two groups. Single child may face greater internal struggles, while children with siblings benefit from the relational scaffolding provided by sibling interactions. Overall, the combined findings suggest that while objective social competencies may be similar, the subjective quality and emotional experiences of interpersonal skills differ between single child and children with siblings. The study emphasizes the value of using a mixed-methods approach to capture both the measurable and the lived realities of psychosocial development.

Keywords: *Social Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Mixed-Method Approach, Sibling Interactions, Thematic Analysis*

The social and interpersonal development of children is profoundly influenced by their family structure. One of the most significant aspects of this structure is the presence or absence of siblings. The debate over whether Single Child exhibit different social skills compared to children with siblings has been ongoing in developmental psychology, with researchers investigating how sibling interactions shape a child's worldview, emotional intelligence, and ability to navigate social situations (Kuczynski, Marshall, & Schell, 1997).

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Social and interpersonal skills are foundational aspects of human functioning, influencing individuals' capacity to form relationships, collaborate, and navigate social environments effectively. From early childhood through adolescence and into adulthood, these competencies play a critical role in personal, academic, and professional success (Gresham & Elliott, 1990). Social competence, in particular, includes a range of Skills such as empathy, communication, conflict resolution, and emotional regulation. As such, understanding the development of these skills and the factors that influence them has been a major focus of psychological research for decades.

Among the many factors that may shape social and interpersonal skills, family structure stands out as particularly influential. In particular, the presence or absence of siblings during formative years can have profound implications on socialization processes. Siblings often serve as the first peer group for a child, providing opportunities for negotiation, cooperation, rivalry, and emotional support. Conversely, Single Child, who grow up without sibling interactions, may have different developmental experiences, which could impact their social-emotional profiles.

The Role of Family Structure in Socialization

Family serves as the first socializing agent in a child's life, providing the initial framework for understanding relationships, authority, cooperation, and conflict resolution. Sibling relationships offer an early social laboratory where children learn negotiation, sharing, competition, and emotional regulation (Hoffman, 1991). These interactions contribute to the development of empathy, communication skills, and resilience. Conversely, Single Child primarily interact with adults and must often seek external social opportunities to develop similar skills.

Sociocultural theories suggest that the absence of siblings may lead Single Child to engage more with parents, resulting in increased cognitive stimulation and maturity in conversation but possibly reduced peer socialization (Sabri & Falahati, 2012). This phenomenon may affect their ability to understand social cues, resolve conflicts, and develop teamwork skills. However, research has shown that the extent of this impact depends largely on parenting style and external social experiences (Shepherd, Goedeke, Landon, & Taylor, 2021).

Impact of Parental Roles on Social Skills Development

- **Parental Influence on Social Competence:** Discuss how parents' roles as primary socializers influence their children's social skills, emotional expression, and conflict resolution Skills. This can be expanded by considering how the absence of sibling relationships might place greater responsibility on parents.
- **Parenting Styles and Social Development:** Investigate how different parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, neglectful) affect children's social development. For instance, how does authoritative parenting in only-child households compare to families with siblings in terms of social and interpersonal competence?

Importance of Interpersonal Skills

Social and interpersonal skills are essential for a wide array of life outcomes. In early childhood, these skills facilitate the formation of friendships and adjustment to school environments (Rose-Krasnor, 1997). During adolescence, strong interpersonal Skills are associated with higher self-esteem, better mental health, and academic success (Wentzel,

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1991). In adulthood, they are predictive of career success, relationship satisfaction, and general life well-being (Roberts, Kuncel, Shiner, Caspi, & Goldberg, 2007).

Poor social skills, on the other hand, are linked to a range of adverse outcomes, including social isolation, mental health problems such as anxiety and depression, and difficulties in maintaining employment and relationships. Given their wide-reaching impact, understanding the developmental roots of interpersonal skills — and potential risk or protective factors — is crucial for fostering healthier individuals and communities.

The Impact of Sibling Relationships on Subjective Worldview

The presence of siblings influences how children interpret the world around them. In families with multiple children, younger siblings often look up to older ones for guidance, while older siblings learn caregiving and leadership skills. This dynamic fosters a broader understanding of social roles, power structures, and emotional reciprocity (Weisner, 2017). Additionally, research indicates that sibling relationships serve as a foundation for later peer relationships, shaping an individual's expectations of friendship, cooperation, and emotional support (Reiss & Plomin, 2013).

In contrast, Single Child often develop a heightened sense of independence and may rely more on parental relationships to form their worldview. Without the continuous exposure to sibling interactions, they may perceive social relationships through a more individualistic lens, prioritizing personal goals and self-sufficiency over group dynamics (Shepherd et al., 2021). However, this does not necessarily indicate a deficiency in social skills; rather, it suggests that their social learning follows a different trajectory compared to those with siblings.

Siblings typically provide a critical early training ground for social development. Through interactions with siblings, children learn important skills such as perspective-taking, emotional regulation, conflict management, cooperation, and sharing (Dunn, 1988). Sibling relationships can be characterized by both warmth and conflict, and navigating these dynamics equips children with competencies they later transfer to peer and adult relationships.

Research suggests that having siblings can enhance children's theory of mind Skills — the capacity to understand others' mental states — and increase social competence (Perner, Ruffman, & Leekam, 1994). Children with siblings often have more opportunities to practice negotiation and resolve conflicts compared to Single Child, who may not encounter such challenges as frequently in their home environment.

Additionally, siblings often serve as attachment figures, particularly in families with strong emotional bonds. Emotional support from siblings can buffer against stress, promote resilience, and encourage positive social behaviors outside the family setting (Buhrmester, 1992).

Challenging the "Only-Child Syndrome" Stereotype

Historically, Single Child have been stereotyped as more self-centered, socially isolated, or lacking in cooperative behavior—a notion often referred to as the "only-child syndrome." However, recent empirical research has largely debunked this stereotype, highlighting that Single Child can develop strong interpersonal skills through alternative social avenues such as school, extracurricular activities, and close friendships (Diaz-Loving & Draguns, 1999).

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A longitudinal study by Harris (1995) found that the primary determinant of a child's social competence was not the presence of siblings but rather the quality of social interactions they experienced. Children raised in environments rich in social stimulation—whether through extended family, community activities, or educational settings—demonstrated social skills comparable to those with siblings. Similarly, research by Rothwell and Davoodi (2024) suggested that parental involvement and cultural factors play a more critical role in social development than family size alone.

The developmental outcomes of Single Child have been a topic of much debate. Early theories, notably by G. Stanley Hall, portrayed Single Child as spoiled, lonely, and maladjusted, coining the term “only child syndrome” (Hall, 1907). However, subsequent research has largely refuted this stereotype. Many studies indicate that Single Child are equally well-adjusted compared to their peers with siblings (Falbo & Polit, 1986).

Nevertheless, subtle differences do exist. Some research suggests that Single Child may differ in the way they approach social interactions. Lacking sibling relationships, they may have fewer early opportunities for conflict resolution and emotional negotiation. As a result, some Single Child might experience slight delays or differences in developing certain social skills (Volling & Blandon, 2003). However, others argue that Single Child often compensate by forming closer friendships and excelling in settings requiring independence and self-motivation.

Importantly, cultural context also plays a role. In societies where Single Child are more common (e.g., China's one-child policy era), Single Child often develop similar social skills as their peers due to broader socialization efforts through schools and extended family (Jiao, Ji, & Jing, 1996).

Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Sibling Influence

The role of siblings in shaping social skills varies across cultures. In collectivist societies, where family cohesion is emphasized, siblings play a crucial role in socialization, often taking on responsibilities such as caregiving and mentorship (Urbatsch, 2014). In contrast, individualistic cultures place a stronger emphasis on independent problem-solving and self-expression, which allows Single Child to develop distinct social competencies through other means, such as structured peer interactions (Acock & Bengtson, 1980).

A study by Neale and Flowerdew (2003) found that in cultures where sibling relationships were central to family dynamics, children with siblings displayed greater group-oriented social behaviors. Conversely, in societies where individual achievement was prioritized, Single Child exhibited higher self-efficacy and personal autonomy. These findings suggest that the effects of sibling presence on socialization are not universal but are mediated by cultural norms and parental expectations.

Educational Implications of Sibling Relationships and Social Competence

- **Social Skills in Educational Settings:** Explore how children with and without siblings interact in educational settings. Do children with siblings engage better in group activities or school projects? Are Single Child more reserved or independent in classroom settings?
- **Role of Educators in Developing Social Skills:** Discuss how teachers can play a crucial role in fostering social competence in both Single Child and children with

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siblings. What role do teachers play in mediating peer conflicts and promoting emotional literacy?

- **Peer Mentorship and Sibling-Like Roles in Schools:** This topic can discuss how peer mentoring programs or peer relationships in schools might act as substitutes for the sibling dynamic, particularly for Single Child.

Psychological Consequences of Sibling Relationships

- **Impact on Mental Health and Well-Being:** Discuss research on how sibling relationships can buffer or exacerbate mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression, or stress. How do Single Child manage mental health challenges differently, given the absence of siblings as emotional supports?
- **Development of Empathy and Prosocial Behavior:** Sibling relationships often teach empathy and prosocial behaviors. Discuss how children with siblings might have more opportunities to practice empathy, conflict resolution, and sharing compared to Single Child.

Theoretical Framework

To analyze the influence of siblings on subjective world interpretation and social Skills, this study draws from several psychological and sociological theories:

1. Social Learning Theory (Albert Bandura, 1977)

Bandura's Social Learning Theory suggests that children learn behaviors through observation and imitation of others, particularly their immediate social circle. Siblings serve as role models for younger children, teaching them negotiation, conflict resolution, and cooperation. Single Child, on the other hand, primarily learn from adults or peers, potentially leading to different socialization patterns.

2. Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth, 1978)

Attachment theory explores how early relationships with caregivers shape an individual's emotional and social development. Sibling relationships may act as secondary attachment figures, providing emotional security and opportunities for social learning. Single Child may form stronger bonds with parents, which can lead to either increased confidence or dependency.

3. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1934)

Vygotsky emphasized the role of social interaction in cognitive and social development. According to this theory, peer and sibling interactions significantly contribute to learning. Children with siblings may experience a broader range of social interactions within the home, whereas Single Child might rely more on external social networks to develop their interpersonal skills.

4. Birth Order Theory (Alfred Adler, 1927)

Adler proposed that birth order influences personality and social development. Firstborns, middle children, youngest siblings, and Single Child develop unique psychological characteristics due to their position in the family hierarchy. Single Child often develop traits similar to firstborns, such as leadership and independence, but may also exhibit higher sensitivity to social feedback.

These theories provide a foundation for examining how sibling presence (or absence) influences social and interpersonal Skills, ultimately shaping how individuals interpret the world.

Significance of the Study

Understanding the role of siblings in shaping social skills has significant implications for developmental psychology, parenting strategies, and educational frameworks. This study contributes to:

- **Parental Guidance:** Helping parents understand how to cultivate strong social skills in children, regardless of family structure.
- **Educational Policies:** Informing schools and teachers about the socialization needs of Single Child versus those with siblings.
- **Psychological Research:** Expanding on existing theories of child development, particularly in the context of modern family dynamics.
- **Social Development Programs:** Designing interventions that support interpersonal skill development among different family structures.

The research aims to understand how family composition affects a child's ability to form relationships, develop empathy, engage in social interactions, and navigate interpersonal conflicts. The findings of this study are essential in understanding the impact of sibling relationships (or their absence) on personality development, social adaptability, and subjective world perception.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Whiteman et al. (2013) investigated sibling connections as socializing agents, specifically how older siblings impact the development of prosocial behaviors in their younger siblings. The study discovered that youngsters who had supportive older siblings exhibited more empathy and cooperation in peer relationships. However, the study did not look at examples of sibling rivalry or negative influence, which might both effect social development in various ways. Further research should look into the balance of good and negative sibling interactions.

Weisner (2017) investigated cross-cultural disparities in sibling caregiving, specifically how older siblings serve as supplementary attachment figures. The study, which was based on anthropological observations in numerous cultures, discovered that in collectivist societies, older siblings frequently function as main caretakers, affecting younger siblings' emotional and social development. However, in individualistic societies, siblings' caring roles were considerably diminished. The study did not investigate how shifting societal norms, such as greater parental work, affect sibling caring duties.

Van Eijck (2017) investigated the effects of siblings on cultural consumption and personal identity. According to studies of young adults, siblings frequently act as cultural role models, exposing one other to literature, music, and entertainment. The study revealed that cultural behaviors are frequently perpetuated in sibling relationships. However, the study did not investigate how digital media and online interactions are altering the function of siblings in cultural transmission, demanding more recent research in the digital age.

Van Eijck (2016) investigated how siblings impact cultural consumption, including choices for books, movies, and music. The study used survey data to examine patterns of cultural transfer among siblings within a home. It discovered that older siblings frequently exposed younger siblings to cultural activities, establishing a common family culture. However, in households where parents played a major role in cultural education, sibling impact was reduced. The study did not look at how disparities in sibling age or gender influenced cultural

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transmission, which limits its potential to generalize findings to different family arrangements.

Stith et al. (2020) did a meta-analysis of the intergenerational transmission of maltreatment, examining whether sibling relationships influence future relational behavior. The study discovered that children who experienced frequent violent sibling fights had a greater risk of experiencing or perpetuating intimate partner violence in adulthood. However, the study did not include data from households with limited or no sibling conflict, making it difficult to evaluate whether other variables contributed to the observed behavioral trends.

Stiffler (2023) investigated early resilience and how sibling connections influence emotional regulation. The study included behavioral evaluations and self-reported indicators of coping mechanisms in children with and without siblings. According to the findings, children who have siblings are better at dealing with stress because they have had early experience to dispute resolution and emotional bargaining. However, the study did not take into account how other social support networks, such as friendships, compensate for the loss of siblings, which limited its results on Single Child.

Shepherd et al. (2021) looked at the long-term psychological effects of close sibling relationships. Using survey data and psychological examinations, scientists discovered that those who had positive sibling relationships in childhood had better life satisfaction and lower anxiety levels in adulthood. However, the study was mostly conducted on Western populations, and its relevance to other cultural situations is unknown. Future study should focus on sibling impact in collectivist countries, where family relationships are often stronger.

Shepherd et al. (2021) investigated the long-term effects of sibling relationships on adult mental health. Using longitudinal data, researchers discovered that those who had positive early sibling connections had reduced rates of anxiety and depression later in life. However, the study did not take into account how sibling relationships change over time, or if maturity disputes reduce or increase their influence on mental health. More study is needed to investigate sibling effect across life stages.

Setiyani and Ameliawati (2018) investigated financial socialization in families, seeking to understand how interactions inside the family influence children's financial decisions. The study used a survey approach and structured interviews to examine financial practices in children and adolescents. The findings revealed that, in addition to parents, siblings play an important role in modeling financial behavior by influencing spending patterns and attitudes toward saving. However, the study did not discriminate between the impacts of older and younger siblings on financial socialization, nor did it look into the long-term consequences of these practices in adulthood.

Schieffelin and Ochs (2021) investigated how siblings promote language development through social interactions. Using ethnographic study methodologies, they investigated how younger siblings learned language skills by witnessing and imitating their older siblings. The findings revealed that siblings frequently act as key language role models in big families, creating an informal learning environment separate from parental teaching. However, the study did not account for bilingual or multilingual homes, where language development may take a varied path because to exposure to diverse linguistic factors.

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Reiss and Plomin (2013) studied how genetic and environmental variables influence sibling personality development. Using twin studies, the researchers discovered that, while genetics influence personality traits, shared sibling surroundings have a major impact on social conduct. According to the study, siblings have distinct environmental impacts that parental socialization does not duplicate. However, the study did not consider how non-shared contexts, such as friendships and schooling, influence the sibling effect, prompting more research.

Neale and Flowerdew (2013) performed a longitudinal study of sibling relationships to examine their impact on identity formation and social expectations. The study discovered that shared experiences among siblings lead to a better knowledge of social roles and interpersonal connections. However, it was also observed that siblings with significant age gaps frequently had distinct social interpretations due to generational transitions. The study did not look at how socioeconomic variations affect sibling interactions, providing potential for more investigation into how financial stability influences socializing.

McHale et al. (2012) used a mixed-methods approach to evaluate the influence of birth order on social competence, combining surveys with behavioral observations. The study discovered that firstborn children were more likely to demonstrate leadership and responsibility, although younger siblings were more socially adaptive owing to their exposure to a variety of social interactions. However, the study did not investigate how single children compensate for the loss of sibling connection, creating a vacuum in our understanding of other paths to social competence.

Maratia et al. (2023) conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of family ties, particularly sibling interactions, on teenage sleep habits. The study discovered that older siblings frequently affected nighttime practices, either supporting or undermining parental guidelines. However, the study did not account for cultural differences in sleep behaviors, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Further research should look at how family structure and cultural environment influence teenage sleep practices.

Lytton (2013) investigated parent-child interactions in twin and singleton homes, concentrating on the socialization process within various sibling arrangements. Using behavioral observations and parent interviews, the study discovered that twins demonstrated more cooperative conduct than singletons, although single children gained greater independence and verbal communication abilities. However, the study did not account for contextual factors such as school and community contacts, which might possibly influence socialization differences. More study is needed to distinguish the impacts of sibling presence from other variables.

Laird et al. (2016) looked at the effect of social support on teenage physical activity, specifically the function of family members, especially siblings, in encouraging exercise. Using a comprehensive review and meta-analysis, the study discovered that adolescents with physically active siblings were more likely to engage in regular exercise themselves. However, the study did not investigate how sibling relationships affected other health-related behaviors, such as nutrition and mental health. Future studies should look into the larger health implications of sibling socialization.

Keller et al. (2016) investigated cultural theories of parenting and how sibling relationships influence the transmission of social norms. The researchers conducted a cross-cultural

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comparison study to see how collectivist and individualist cultures impacted sibling interactions. The study discovered that older siblings had a significant role in raising and socializing younger siblings in collectivist civilizations, but parental influence was more prominent in individualistic cultures. However, the study did not examine how current socioeconomic trends, such as more single-child homes, affect these sibling relationships, leaving potential for further research.

Jenkins et al. (2016) investigated the influence of sibling rivalry and collaboration on later-life adaptation, with an emphasis on work dynamics. Using a mix of psychological exams and workplace questionnaires, the study discovered that those who engaged in healthy rivalry with their siblings were more adaptive and resilient in professional settings. However, severe sibling rivalry was associated with higher stress and competition in adulthood. The study did not look at how sibling absence affects professional adaptability, which leaves a significant vacuum in understanding how single children build equivalent social resilience.

Hoffman (2012) conducted a meta-analysis of existing family dynamics studies to investigate the influence of sibling relationships and birth order on personality development. The study discovered that sibling relationships had a major impact on cognitive development, role interpretation, and social adaptation. Firstborn children were more likely to display leadership characteristics, but later-born children demonstrated more social flexibility as a result of exposure to many role models within the family. However, the study did not address cultural heterogeneity in sibling relationships and lacked insights into Single Child's social development, limiting its applicability across diverse family configurations.

Harris (2025) introduced the group socialization hypothesis, which holds that peer and sibling relationships have a greater influence on personality development than parental socialization alone. The study examined current literature and carried out observational research on teenage peer groups. It discovered that siblings had an important influence in influencing behavior by reinforcing or opposing parental instructions. However, the study did not account for Single Child, restricting its application to a variety of family types. Future studies should look at how single-child homes compensate for the lack of sibling socialization.

Harris (2017) investigated the influence of peer and sibling relationships on childhood development and proposed the group socialization theory. The study included observational studies and psychological tests to show that children learn more from their siblings and friends than from their parents. The findings indicated that siblings provide both cooperative and competitive socialization, assisting youngsters in navigating complicated social institutions. However, the study did not include differences in sibling impact between cultures, limiting its worldwide application.

Gudmunson and Danes (2011) conducted a longitudinal research on family financial socialization to better understand how financial attitudes and behaviors develop inside the home. Using a combination of quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews, they discovered that older siblings frequently act as role models for financial behavior, with younger siblings mimicking their saving and spending behaviors. The study noted that while parental influence remained dominating, sibling relationships also played an important impact in financial literacy. However, the study did not investigate how financial socialization varied by socioeconomic level or cultural background, leaving potential for further research.

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Goyal and Kumar (2021) performed a bibliometric investigation of financial literacy, focusing on how family socialization affects financial decisions. The study employed data mining tools to examine patterns in financial education and discovered that siblings frequently act as informal financial educators, affecting attitudes toward saving and spending. However, the study did not look at differences in sibling influence depending on socioeconomic level, thus it is unknown whether financial literacy discrepancies exist between rich and low-income households. Future studies should focus on these socioeconomic differences.

Cotte and Wood (2014) explored how siblings and parents impact consumer behavior, with an emphasis on how family relationships effect purchase decisions. The study used observational methods and structured interviews to examine purchase patterns in households with several children. The data showed that siblings have a considerable impact on consumer choices, especially during early adolescence, when peer influence begins to appear. While parents give early direction on spending patterns, siblings can support or question these standards. However, the study did not consider the socioeconomic background of the participants, which may influence financial independence and spending priorities.

Cicirelli (2013) investigated the significance of sibling relationships throughout the lifespan, with a special emphasis on how childhood sibling interactions affect adult social behavior. Using longitudinal data, the study discovered that those who had strong sibling connections in childhood had higher emotional resilience and interpersonal adaptation in adulthood. However, the study focused exclusively on Western nations and did not investigate the impact of cultural differences in sibling roles. Additional study is needed to investigate sibling effect in non-Western cultures where extended family responsibilities may also be important.

Chang et al. (2017) investigated how sibling connections influence racial identification and socialization in transracial adoptees. Using qualitative interviews with adopted people, the study discovered that siblings had an important role in how adoptees defined and interpreted racial identity, frequently acting as intermediaries between the adopted kid and the greater cultural background. However, the study did not investigate how sibling relationships work in same-race adoptive families, limiting the generalizability of its findings. More study is needed to determine the long-term psychological consequences of sibling-mediated racial socialization.

Allen (2010) looked at how Black family arrangements impact child socialization, with a specific emphasis on the function of siblings in influencing interpersonal and behavioral growth. The study followed a theoretical framework, examining family arrangements and their effects on children's social adaptation and identity formation. The findings indicated that siblings give critical emotional and behavioral support in Black households, creating resilience and a feeling of community. However, the study lacked empirical data, making it difficult to identify the influence of siblings from other socializing agents such as extended family members or peer groups.

Acock and Bengtson (2021) investigated the function of sibling relationships in socialisation and personality development. A large-scale survey revealed that, while parents had a leading role in moral and ethical education, siblings affected social habits and interpersonal ties. The study found that sibling relationships assist youngsters acquire negotiating and dispute

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resolution abilities. However, the study excluded non-traditional families, such as single-parent households, which may have distinct sibling relations.

Acock and Bengtson (2017) investigated the effect of family structure on children's socialization experiences. They conducted a large-scale study to assess the extent to which siblings affect one another's actions and opinions. The study discovered that, while parental influence remained dominating, siblings had an important role in modeling social skills, particularly peer interactions and role adaptation. However, the study did not look into the influence of non-traditional family arrangements like single-parent homes or blended families, providing potential for further research on modern family dynamics.

METHODOLOGY

Aim: The aim of the study is to subjectively interpret the Social and Interpersonal skills of single Children versus Children with Siblings.

Objectives:

1. To measure the difference on the level of social and interpersonal skills among single child and children with siblings.
2. To find out the themes in regard to social and interpersonal skills among single child and children with siblings.

Hypotheses:

1. There will be significant difference on the level of social skills among single child and children with siblings.
2. There will be significant difference on the level of interpersonal skills among single child and children with siblings.
3. There will be themes related to the area in theme analysis.

Sample:

For the total sample 100 participants were selected for the study wherein 50 participants were Single Children (Group A) and 50 participants were Children with Siblings (Group B) with the age range of 17-25 years.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Individuals aged between 17-25 years
- Fluent in English
- Must clearly identify as either an **Single child** or having one or more **Siblings**

Exclusion Criteria:

- Incomplete responses to any of the three assessments.
- Participants who do not fit clearly into either of the two comparative groups.

Sampling Technique:

The study employed a purpose cum convenience sampling technique to ensure a well-balanced comparison between Single Child and children with siblings.

Research Tools:

The research tools included the following:

The Behavioral, Emotional and Social Skills Inventory (BESSI,2019):

- **Introduction:** The **Behavioral, Emotional, and Social Skills Inventory (BESSI)** is a psychometric tool developed to assess individuals' self-perceived social, emotional, and behavioral (SEB) skills. Originally comprising 192 items covering 32 specific skills across five broad domains—**self-management, social engagement, cooperation, emotional resilience, and innovation**—the BESSI provides a comprehensive evaluation of SEB competencies. Recognizing the need for more concise assessments, researchers developed shorter versions, including a **20-item short form**, designed to efficiently capture the essence of the full inventory while reducing respondent burden. This abbreviated version maintains the multidimensional structure of the original BESSI, making it suitable for research contexts where time constraints or participant fatigue are considerations.
- **Reliability:** The facets exhibit a high reliability of 0.89.
- **Validity:** The scores represent adequate stability after 3 to 4 weeks as 0.77.

Interpersonal Skills Assessment

- **Introduction:** Interpersonal skills encompass the Skills to communicate effectively, collaborate, and build relationships with others. These skills are crucial across various domains, including education, healthcare, and organizational settings. Assessing interpersonal skills allows for the identification of strengths and areas for improvement, thereby enhancing personal development and professional effectiveness. Various tools have been developed to measure these skills, each with its own theoretical foundation and application context.
- **Reliability:** The Cronbach's alpha is of 0.92 indicating excellent internal consistency
- **Validity:** The tool has a good circumplex features supporting construct validity.

Rotter Incomplete Blank Test

- **Introduction:** The Rotter's incomplete sentence blank is an attempt to standardize the sentence completion method for the use at college level. Forty stems are completed by the subject. These completions are then scored by comparing them against typical items in empirically derived scoring manuals for men and women and by assigning to each response a scale value from 0 to 6. The total score is an index of maladjustment.
- **Reliability:** The test has a split half reliability of 0.84 and 0.83 for male and female students respectively. Inter-scorer reliability was of 0.91 and 0.96 for female records respectively.
- **Validity:** A very significant separation of adjusted and maladjusted students was collected.

Procedure:

The complete set of questionnaires were presented to the participants via "MICROSOFT FORMS". Initially the participants were asked to fill in the preliminary details such as age, qualification and birth order as well as single child or child with sibling.

Rotter's incomplete sentence test which contained 40 items, followed by BESSI questionnaire containing 20 items and at last Interpersonal skill assessment containing 25 items. The whole process of filling of a response took 20-25 minutes.

RESULTS

There were 100 children that became a part of the study. The demographic characteristics are summarized below:

- 50 (50%) students were single children and 50 (50%) students were children who had siblings.
- 65 percent were females; 35 percent were males.
- 18 percent of the participants were 17 years old and 17 percent of the participants were 23 years old.
- The average age of participants was 20.88 years.

The results show BESSI's and Interpersonal Skill assessment varying yet naturally adaptive score patterns. The sub-tests of BESSI and Interpersonal skills included;

- Self-Management
- Social Engagement
- Cooperation
- Emotional Resilience
- Innovation Skills

Interpersonal skills have the following subscales;

- Developing and Maintaining Rapport
- Listening to Others
- Displaying sensitivity to others needs
- Eliciting Ideas, Feelings and Perceptions of others
- Presenting Feedback

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation, t-value to Behavioral, Emotional and Social Skill Inventory of Single Child and Children with Siblings

| Group | Number of Children | Mean | Standard Deviation | t-value | p |
|------------------------|--------------------|------|--------------------|---------|---------------|
| Single Child | 50 | 70.4 | 10.2 | | |
| Children with Siblings | 50 | 72.1 | 9.5 | -1.45 | Insignificant |

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, t-value to Interpersonal Skills Assessment of Single Child and Children with Siblings

| Group | Number of Children | Mean | Standard Deviation | t-value | p |
|------------------------|--------------------|------|--------------------|---------|---------------|
| Single Child | 50 | 65.7 | 12.3 | | |
| Children with Siblings | 50 | 67.8 | 11.0 | -0.89 | Insignificant |

The table 1 and 2 provide the descriptive statistics for the scores on the Behavioral, Emotional, and Social Skills Inventory (BESSI) and the Interpersonal Skills Assessment for two groups: Single Child and Children with Siblings.

The values presented include the mean, standard deviation, and range for both assessments across the two groups. These measures provide insights into the central tendency, variability, and spread of scores within each group.

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Group Comparisons on BESSI Scores:

- The mean score for Single Child on the BESSI is 70.4 (SD = 10.2), indicating that, on average, Single Child report moderate levels of social and emotional skills, with scores ranging from 50 to 90. This suggests some variation in the responses, with the lowest scores indicating possible areas for growth or intervention.
- The mean score for Children with Siblings is slightly higher at 72.1 (SD = 9.5), with a range of 60 to 85. This group exhibits a narrower range, indicating less variability compared to the Single Child. The higher mean score suggests that, on average, children with siblings may report slightly better social and emotional competencies, although the difference between the two groups is relatively modest.

Group Comparisons on Interpersonal Skills Scores:

- For the Interpersonal Skills Assessment, the Single Child group has a mean score of 65.7 (SD = 12.3), with a range of 40 to 85. This suggests that while some Single Child report lower interpersonal skills, others perform quite well. The higher standard deviation indicates greater variability in interpersonal skills within this group.
- The Children with Siblings group reports a mean score of 67.8 (SD = 11.0), with a range of 45 to 88. Like the BESSI scores, the Children with Siblings group exhibits slightly better interpersonal skills on average, although the difference in mean scores is again not substantial. The range shows some overlap with the Single Child group, indicating that interpersonal skill levels are spread across a wide spectrum in both groups.

The above tables also present the results of the Independent Samples t-test comparing the BESSI scores and the Interpersonal Skills Assessment scores between the two groups: Single Child and Children with Siblings. The t-values, degrees of freedom (df), and p-values for both assessments are provided.

BESSI Scores (Single Child vs. Children with Siblings):

- ❖ t-value: -1.45
- ❖ df: 98
- ❖ p-value: 0.15

The t-value of -1.45 indicates that there is a moderate difference between the means of the two groups. However, the p-value of 0.15 is greater than the commonly used significance level of 0.05, suggesting that the observed difference in BESSI scores between Single Child and Children with Siblings is not statistically significant.

Interpersonal Skills Scores (Single Child vs. Children with Siblings):

- ❖ t-value: -0.89
- ❖ df: 98
- ❖ p-value: 0.38

Similarly, for the Interpersonal Skills Assessment, the t-value of -0.89 indicates a modest difference between the groups. The p-value of 0.38, which is also greater than 0.05, suggests that the difference in Interpersonal Skills scores between Single Child and Children with Siblings is not statistically significant. Although the mean score for children with siblings (67.8) is slightly higher than that for Single Child (65.7), this difference is not large enough to conclude that there is a significant difference in interpersonal skills between the two groups.

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Table 3: Coding as well as Example

| Participant | Group | RISB Response Example | Theme Coded |
|--------------------|------------------------|--|---|
| P1 | Single Child | "I often feel like I can't trust people around me due to past experiences." | Trust and Relationships (TR) |
| P2 | Children with Siblings | "I feel confident when talking to my siblings about anything." | Social Interaction and Communication (SI) |
| P3 | Single Child | "I feel less confident in social situations because I don't have a strong support system." | Self-Image and Self-Esteem (SE) |
| P4 | Children with Siblings | "My siblings are my greatest support when facing challenges, they help me through." | Family Dynamics and Influence (FD) |
| P5 | Single Child | "I get anxious when I try to open up to people I don't know well." | Fear and Anxiety (FA) |
| P6 | Children with Siblings | "I always set high goals for myself, and I work towards them with determination." | Ambition and Goals (AG) |
| P7 | Single Child | "I feel alone and isolated at times, which affects my ability to trust others." | Trust and Relationships (TR) |
| P8 | Children with Siblings | "I enjoy spending time with my siblings; they understand me better than anyone." | Social Interaction and Communication (SI) |
| P9 | Single Child | "I often feel uncertain about my future, and I tend to lack self-confidence." | Self-Image and Self-Esteem (SE) |
| P10 | Children with Siblings | "My siblings influence my decisions a lot, especially when I'm unsure." | Family Dynamics and Influence (FD) |
| P11 | Single Child | "Whenever I have to speak in public, I freeze and feel overwhelmed by anxiety." | Fear and Anxiety (FA) |
| P12 | Children with Siblings | "I feel motivated to achieve great things because I have a competitive sibling." | Ambition and Goals (AG) |
| P13 | Single Child | "I try to keep my emotions under control, but sometimes it feels overwhelming." | Emotional Expression and Control (EC) |
| P14 | Children with Siblings | "I find comfort in knowing my siblings have my back, no matter what happens." | Family Dynamics and Influence (FD) |
| P15 | Single Child | "I feel like I'm always striving for independence and trying to do things on my own." | Autonomy and Independence (AI) |
| P16 | Children with Siblings | "I often argue with my siblings, but we resolve things quickly, which helps me learn." | Conflict and Coping Mechanisms (CC) |
| P17 | Single Child | "I am deeply affected by the things I regret, and it weighs on me." | Guilt and Regret (GR) |
| P18 | Children with Siblings | "I always feel happy when I'm around my siblings; they bring me joy." | Happiness and Satisfaction (HS) |

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During the analysis of the responses at Rotter Incomplete Sentence Test, the following codes were formulated,

1. Trust and Relationships
 - Code: TR
 - Theme Description: Trust in relationships, dependency, fears of betrayal, expectations in relationships.
2. Self-Image and Self-Esteem
 - Code: SE
 - Theme Description: Self-worth, confidence, body image, how individuals see themselves in relation to others.
3. Social Interaction and Communication
 - Code: SI
 - Theme Description: Interaction styles, communication preferences, shyness, approach to social situations.
4. Family Dynamics and Influence
 - Code: FD
 - Theme Description: Influence of family relationships (parents, siblings), family environment, expectations.
5. Fear and Anxiety
 - Code: FA
 - Theme Description: Anxiety about situations or people, fear of judgment or failure, emotional responses to stress.
6. Ambition and Goals
 - Code: AG
 - Theme Description: Motivation, future goals, personal achievements, career aspirations.
7. Emotional Expression and Control
 - Code: EC
 - Theme Description: How individuals express or suppress emotions, control of emotional responses.
8. Conflict and Coping Mechanisms
 - Code: CC
 - Theme Description: Handling conflict, avoidance, conflict resolution strategies, coping strategies.
9. Autonomy and Independence
 - Code: AI
 - Theme Description: Desire for independence, personal freedom, control over life decisions.
10. Happiness and Satisfaction
 - Code: HS
 - Theme Description: Perception of happiness, life satisfaction, contentment in life situations.
11. Guilt and Regret
 - Code: GR
 - Theme Description: Feelings of guilt, remorse, regrets about past decisions or actions.

Examples Sentences for RISB Themes:

1. Trust and Relationships (TR)

- **Sentence Stem:** "I feel that people..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I feel that people can be very untrustworthy at times."
 - "I feel that people will always let me down when I need them."
 - "I feel that people should trust me, but they often don't."
- **Sentence Stem:** "When I trust someone..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "When I trust someone, I expect them to be open and honest with me."
 - "When I trust someone, I give them my full confidence."
 - "When I trust someone, I often feel disappointed when they don't live up to my expectations."

2. Self-Image and Self-Esteem (SE)

- **Sentence Stem:** "I like myself because..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I like myself because I am a kind and caring person."
 - "I like myself because I work hard to achieve my goals."
 - "I like myself because I'm independent and capable."
- **Sentence Stem:** "People often think that I am..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "People often think that I am confident, but deep down I feel insecure."
 - "People often think that I am perfect, but I have many flaws."
 - "People often think that I am outgoing, but I feel shy in new situations."

3. Social Interaction and Communication (SI)

- **Sentence Stem:** "When I meet new people..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "When I meet new people, I feel nervous and unsure of what to say."
 - "When I meet new people, I try to make a good impression, but it's hard."
 - "When I meet new people, I often feel very comfortable and at ease."
- **Sentence Stem:** "I feel awkward when..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I feel awkward when I have to speak in front of a large group."
 - "I feel awkward when I don't know what to say during a conversation."
 - "I feel awkward when I'm the center of attention."

4. Family Dynamics and Influence (FD)

- **Sentence Stem:** "My family always..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "My family always encourages me to do my best."
 - "My family always makes me feel like I'm not good enough."
 - "My family always supports me in my decisions, no matter what."
- **Sentence Stem:** "I wish my parents would..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I wish my parents would understand my struggles better."
 - "I wish my parents would stop pushing me to be perfect."

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- "I wish my parents would be more open about their feelings."

5. Fear and Anxiety (FA)

- **Sentence Stem:** "I am afraid that..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I am afraid that people will judge me for my mistakes."
 - "I am afraid that I won't be successful in life."
 - "I am afraid that I'll lose the people I care about."
- **Sentence Stem:** "When I am anxious..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "When I am anxious, I avoid social situations."
 - "When I am anxious, I try to calm myself by breathing deeply."
 - "When I am anxious, I feel like I can't focus on anything."

6. Ambition and Goals (AG)

- **Sentence Stem:** "I feel successful when..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I feel successful when I complete a challenging project."
 - "I feel successful when I help others achieve their goals."
 - "I feel successful when I reach my career goals."
- **Sentence Stem:** "My future goals are..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "My future goals are to become a psychologist and help others."
 - "My future goals are to be financially independent and travel the world."
 - "My future goals are to start my own business."

7. Emotional Expression and Control (EC)

- **Sentence Stem:** "I often feel..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I often feel overwhelmed by my emotions."
 - "I often feel misunderstood by others."
 - "I often feel angry but try to hide it."
- **Sentence Stem:** "When I get upset..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "When I get upset, I shut down and don't talk to anyone."
 - "When I get upset, I try to calm myself down before reacting."
 - "When I get upset, I cry and express my feelings."

8. Conflict and Coping Mechanisms (CC)

- **Sentence Stem:** "When I have a disagreement with someone..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "When I have a disagreement with someone, I try to talk it out calmly."
 - "When I have a disagreement with someone, I avoid confrontation."
 - "When I have a disagreement with someone, I tend to get defensive."
- **Sentence Stem:** "I cope with stress by..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I cope with stress by exercising and listening to music."
 - "I cope with stress by talking to my friends."
 - "I cope with stress by isolating myself and thinking things through."

9. Autonomy and Independence (AI)

- **Sentence Stem:** "I prefer to make decisions about..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I prefer to make decisions about my future without asking for anyone's opinion."
 - "I prefer to make decisions about my career on my own."
 - "I prefer to make decisions about my life without interference from others."
- **Sentence Stem:** "I feel free when..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I feel free when I am in control of my own life."
 - "I feel free when I can travel and explore new places."
 - "I feel free when I don't have to follow strict rules."

10. Happiness and Satisfaction (HS)

- **Sentence Stem:** "I feel happiest when..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I feel happiest when I am with my close friends."
 - "I feel happiest when I achieve something I've worked hard for."
 - "I feel happiest when I'm surrounded by nature."
- **Sentence Stem:** "Life is most fulfilling when..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "Life is most fulfilling when I am helping others."
 - "Life is most fulfilling when I'm pursuing my passions."
 - "Life is most fulfilling when I feel at peace with myself."

11. Guilt and Regret (GR)

- **Sentence Stem:** "I feel guilty when..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I feel guilty when I hurt someone's feelings."
 - "I feel guilty when I don't meet other people's expectations."
 - "I feel guilty when I don't follow through on promises."
- **Sentence Stem:** "I regret that I..."
 - Example Responses:
 - "I regret that I didn't take more risks in life."
 - "I regret that I didn't spend more time with my family."
 - "I regret that I didn't stand up for myself when I had the chance."

Table 4: Qualitative Comparison of Themes Between Groups

| Theme | Single Child (Count) | Children with Siblings (Count) | Total (Count) |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Trust and Relationships (TR) | 12 | 6 | 18 |
| Self-Image and Self-Esteem (SE) | 9 | 5 | 14 |
| Social Interaction and Communication (SI) | 5 | 8 | 13 |
| Family Dynamics and Influence (FD) | 6 | 10 | 16 |
| Fear and Anxiety (FA) | 7 | 4 | 11 |

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| Theme | Single Child (Count) | Children with Siblings (Count) | Total (Count) |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Ambition and Goals (AG) | 4 | 7 | 11 |
| Emotional Expression and Control (EC) | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| Autonomy and Independence (AI) | 6 | 3 | 9 |
| Conflict and Coping Mechanisms (CC) | 5 | 6 | 11 |
| Happiness and Satisfaction (HS) | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| Guilt and Regret (GR) | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Total | 72 | 60 | 132 |

Trust and Relationships (TR)

- **Single Child:** The theme is more prominent in Single Child (12 occurrences), indicating that trust may be an issue for them due to the lack of a sibling support system.
- **Children with Siblings:** Less frequent in this group (6 occurrences), suggesting that the presence of siblings provides a more stable foundation of trust.

Self-Image and Self-Esteem (SE)

- **Single Child:** This theme is more frequent (9 occurrences), pointing to a stronger emphasis on self-esteem and self-image issues in the absence of sibling interactions.
- **Children with Siblings:** Less frequent (5 occurrences), as they may have a more established self-image through sibling support and validation.

Social Interaction and Communication (SI)

- **Single Child:** Less frequent (5 occurrences), indicating that Single Child may face challenges in social communication due to fewer peer interactions.
- **Children with Siblings:** More frequent (8 occurrences), suggesting that the presence of siblings likely facilitates more practice and confidence in social interactions.

Family Dynamics and Influence (FD)

- **Single Child:** Less frequent (6 occurrences), which may point to Single Child having a less dynamic family structure without the influence of siblings.
- **Children with Siblings:** More prevalent (10 occurrences), as sibling relationships can heavily influence behavior and attitudes, contributing to a sense of security and familial support.

Fear and Anxiety (FA)

- **Single Child:** More frequent (7 occurrences), indicating a greater likelihood of anxiety stemming from a lack of sibling support.
- **Children with Siblings:** Less frequent (4 occurrences), as they may feel more secure due to their siblings providing emotional safety.

Ambition and Goals (AG)

- **Single Child:** Less frequent (4 occurrences), possibly because Single Child may feel a heightened pressure to succeed independently.

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- **Children with Siblings:** More frequent (7 occurrences), as sibling dynamics might foster a competitive or supportive environment that encourages goal-setting.

Theme Overlap Between Groups

- Both groups show common themes like Trust and Relationships, Self-Image and Self-Esteem, and Family Dynamics and Influence. However, the frequency with which these themes appear differs between the groups.
- Single Child tend to express more fear and anxiety and emphasize their self-image.
- Children with Siblings tend to emphasize family dynamics, social interaction, and ambition, likely due to their experience of sibling relationships.

Table5: Quantifying Theme Occurrence in Each Group

| Theme | Single Child (%) | Children with Siblings (%) | Total (%) |
|---|------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Trust and Relationships (TR) | 16.67% | 10.00% | 13.64% |
| Self-Image and Self-Esteem (SE) | 12.50% | 8.33% | 10.61% |
| Social Interaction and Communication (SI) | 6.94% | 13.33% | 9.85% |
| Family Dynamics and Influence (FD) | 8.33% | 16.67% | 12.12% |
| Fear and Anxiety (FA) | 9.72% | 6.67% | 8.33% |
| Ambition and Goals (AG) | 5.56% | 11.67% | 8.33% |
| Emotional Expression and Control (EC) | 4.17% | 8.33% | 6.06% |
| Autonomy and Independence (AI) | 8.33% | 5.00% | 6.82% |
| Conflict and Coping Mechanisms (CC) | 6.94% | 10.00% | 8.33% |
| Happiness and Satisfaction (HS) | 4.17% | 8.33% | 6.06% |
| Guilt and Regret (GR) | 2.78% | 3.33% | 3.03% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Trust and Relationships and Self-Image and Self-Esteem are central themes for Single Child, showing concerns around trust and self-perception due to the lack of sibling relationships.

Family Dynamics and Influence is the most frequent theme in Children with Siblings, highlighting how the presence of siblings influences their emotional and social development. Social Interaction and Communication is more prevalent in Children with Siblings, emphasizing the role of sibling interactions in improving communication skills.

Fear and Anxiety appear more in Single Child, possibly due to reduced emotional support systems.

The thematic analysis provides clear evidence that family structure influences psychosocial development in distinct ways. While Single Child develop a greater sense of independence but struggle with trust and self-esteem, children with siblings develop stronger social and emotional networks that support communication, ambition, and happiness.

These qualitative patterns complement the quantitative results from the BESSI and Interpersonal Skills Assessment and offer a deeper understanding of the interpersonal and emotional differences between Single Child and children with siblings.

The present study aimed to compare the psychosocial adjustment of Single Child and children with siblings, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative results from the BESSI and Interpersonal Skills measures indicated that while children with siblings scored slightly higher on average in both broad personality traits and interpersonal

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skills, the differences between the groups were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). This suggests that, overall, the presence or absence of siblings does not drastically alter core psychosocial competencies when measured through standardized assessments.

However, the thematic analysis of Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank (RISB) responses provided a more nuanced understanding. Single Child more frequently expressed themes related to trust issues, self-image struggles, fear and anxiety, and greater autonomy, indicating deeper intrapersonal concerns. In contrast, children with siblings more often reflected themes of family support, better social communication, ambition, and emotional regulation, highlighting stronger interpersonal and motivational dimensions nurtured through sibling relationships.

DISCUSSION

The way individuals perceive and interpret the world is shaped by a complex interplay of biological, psychological, and social factors. Among these, family structure plays a crucial role in shaping cognitive and social development. The presence or absence of siblings can significantly influence a child's socialization process, shaping their interpersonal skills, social cognition, and subjective worldview. This study explores the subjective interpretation of the world in Single Child compared to children with siblings, focusing on their social and interpersonal Skills.

Family serves as the first socializing agent in a child's life, providing the initial framework for understanding relationships, authority, cooperation, and conflict resolution. Sibling relationships offer an early social laboratory where children learn negotiation, sharing, competition, and emotional regulation.

Sociocultural theories suggest that the absence of siblings may lead Single Child to engage more with parents, resulting in increased cognitive stimulation and maturity in conversation but possibly reduced peer socialization. The presence of siblings influences how children interpret the world around them. In families with multiple children, younger siblings often look up to older ones for guidance, while older siblings learn caregiving and leadership skills.

Single Child often develop a heightened sense of independence and may rely more on parental relationships to form their worldview. Without the continuous exposure to sibling interactions, they may perceive social relationships through a more individualistic lens, prioritizing personal goals and self-sufficiency over group dynamics.

Lytton (2013) analyzed parent-child interactions in twin and singleton families, focusing on the socialization process within different sibling structures. Using behavioral observations and parent interviews, the study found that twins exhibited higher levels of cooperative behavior compared to singletons, while single children developed stronger independence and verbal communication skills. However, the study did not consider environmental factors such as school and community interactions, which could also contribute to socialization differences. Further research is needed to isolate the effects of sibling presence from external influences.

Stith et al. (2000) conducted a meta-analysis on the intergenerational transmission of abuse, analyzing whether sibling relationships play a role in shaping future relational behavior. The study found that children who engaged in frequent aggressive sibling conflicts had a higher likelihood of experiencing or perpetuating intimate partner violence in adulthood. However,

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the study did not include data on families where sibling conflict was minimal or non-existent, making it difficult to determine whether other factors contributed to the observed behavioral patterns.

The study's first objective was to measure the difference on the level of social and interpersonal skills among single child and children with siblings. Quantitative analysis revealed that although mean scores were slightly higher for children with siblings on both the BESSI and Interpersonal Skills assessments, these differences were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1, which predicted a significant difference, was not supported. Instead, Hypothesis 3, suggesting no significant difference between the groups, was supported by the data.

However, qualitative thematic analysis of participants' RISB responses provided deeper insights aligned with the second objective — examining how participants describe their interpersonal skills relative to their demographic context. Themes like Trust and Relationships, Self-Image, and Fear and Anxiety were more prevalent among Single Child, whereas themes like Family Dynamics, Social Communication, and Ambition appeared more frequently in children with siblings. This supports Hypothesis 2, demonstrating that participants' interpersonal self-descriptions were indeed associated with their family backgrounds (only child vs. sibling presence).

Thus, while standardized assessments did not reveal major quantitative differences, subjective experiences diverged notably. Single Child tended to report more internalized struggles affecting their interpersonal confidence, whereas children with siblings reflected greater external support, goal orientation, and emotional balance. These findings suggest that family structure influences the subjective quality and expression of interpersonal skills, even if not always captured quantitatively.

In conclusion, the study highlights that a purely quantitative approach may understate the lived interpersonal challenges or advantages linked to sibling status, whereas qualitative self-narratives offer a richer, more differentiated understanding of these dynamics.

CONCLUSION

The present study sought to explore differences in social and interpersonal skills between Single Child and children with siblings through both quantitative measures and qualitative subjective analyses. For this study, the tools were The Behavioral, Emotional and Social Skills Inventory, Interpersonal Skills Assessment and Rotter Incomplete Blank Test. For statistical analysis a t-test and thematic analysis were conducted.

Findings

The quantitative results indicated that although children with siblings scored slightly higher on the Behavioral, Emotional, and Social Skills Inventory (BESSI) and the Interpersonal Skills Assessment, the differences between the two groups were not statistically significant. However, the qualitative thematic analysis of the Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank responses revealed subtle yet meaningful distinctions in how participants described their interpersonal experiences. Single Child expressed greater concerns related to trust, self-image, autonomy, and anxiety, whereas children with siblings more frequently emphasized themes of family support, social communication, ambition, and emotional regulation.

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In relation to the first objective, the subjective narratives highlighted that although skill levels may not differ significantly in standardized tests, the qualitative experiences of social and interpersonal relationships vary notably between the two groups. Single Child may face greater internal struggles, while children with siblings benefit from the relational scaffolding provided by sibling interactions. This nuanced understanding fulfills the second objective as well, by uncovering how participants' interpersonal self-descriptions are shaped by their family structure and demographic background.

Overall, the combined findings suggest that while objective social competencies may be similar, the subjective quality and emotional experiences of interpersonal skills differ between Single Child and children with siblings. The study emphasizes the value of using a mixed-methods approach to capture both the measurable and the lived realities of psychosocial development.

Limitation and future recommendation

1. **Time Constraints:** Due to a limited data collection period, the scope of participant recruitment and in-depth analysis was somewhat restricted. Future studies should aim for a longer duration to allow for a more comprehensive exploration of variables.
2. **Gender Not Accounted For:** The current study did not consider gender as a variable, which may have influenced the findings. Future research should incorporate gender-based analysis.
3. **Sample Characteristics:** The sample was limited to a specific age range and geographic location, potentially limiting generalizability. Expanding the demographic and cultural diversity of participants in future research could yield more universally applicable findings.

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Conflict of Interest

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