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Research Paper

To Study the Difference in Social Intelligence and Anxiety Among First Born and Second Born Senior Secondary Students

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ABSTRACT

This study explores whether birth order influences social intelligence and anxiety among senior secondary students. A sample of 120 students (aged 16–18) from Faridabad, Haryana, was divided into four groups: firstborn males, firstborn females, secondborn males, and secondborn females. Participants were assessed using the Social Intelligence Scale (SIS) and Sinha's Comprehensive Anxiety Test (SCAT). Statistical analysis revealed no significant differences in overall social intelligence or anxiety between firstborn and secondborn students, nor significant interaction effects of gender and birth order. These findings suggest that birth order may not be a decisive factor in shaping social intelligence and anxiety among adolescents.

Keywords: *Anxiety, Birth order, Gender, Social intelligence*

Birth order is the chronological order in which a child is born into a family, which some psychological theories propose influences a child's personality and behaviour. Historically, the concept traces back to thinkers like Aristotle, but it gained scientific traction through Alfred Adler in the 20th century. Adler emphasized that birth order impacts personality development, suggesting firstborns tend to be more responsible and ambitious, while second borns lean towards creativity and rebellion

Theories related

In an effort to explain how one's position in a household may impact their traits and growth, several birth order hypotheses have been proposed.

Below are some of the most well-known theories:

- **Adlerian Theory**: Suggests birth order shapes personality through family dynamics and individual responses to those dynamics.
- **Family Constellation Theory (Walter Toman)**: Posits that sibling roles and parental expectations impact personality traits.
- **Resource Dilution Theory (Judith Blake)**: Argues that parental resources (time, money, attention) are diluted with each additional child, potentially impacting laterborns' development.

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Social Intelligence Social intelligence, first introduced by Edward Thorndike (1920), refers to the ability to understand and manage people and to act wisely in human relations. It encompasses traits like empathy, social awareness, and communication skills. Theories like Gardner's Multiple Intelligences and Sternberg's Triarchic Theory support the multifaceted nature of social intelligence.Importance in Students For students, social intelligence is pivotal. It aids in forming peer relationships, handling academic stress, and improving overall well-being and academic success.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a common emotional state characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes. It becomes clinically significant when persistent and interfering with daily functioning. Theories explaining anxiety include:

- **Psychoanalytic Perspective**: Rooted in unconscious conflicts.
- **Behavioural Perspective**: Result of learned responses through classical and operant conditioning.
- **Cognitive Perspective**: Arises from distorted thought patterns like catastrophizing or overgeneralization.

Relation between birth order and anxiety

Research is still being done on the complicated subject of the connection between birth order and anxiety. While some studies have shown no conclusive link, others have hypothesised that birth order may play a role in the emergence of anxiety.

One theory contends that firstborn children are more vulnerable to anxiety because they are usually under pressure to do well and meet their parents' expectations. They could also have a stronger tendency to feel in control and in charge, both of which can make people anxious.

On the other side, some research has shown that children who were born later may be more prone to anxiety because they may feel inferior to their older siblings and experience more rivalry and insecurity.It's crucial to remember that there might not be a clear link that exists between natal order and anxiety as the onset of anxiety can be impacted by a range of different factors. They include a person's personality qualities, environment, experiences, and genetics.

In any event, it's crucial to keep in mind that anxiety is a curable disorder, and regardless of birth order, obtaining professional care may be useful in controlling symptoms and enhancing general wellbeing.

According to a research that was published in the Journal of Psychiatric Research, firstborn children are more prone than their younger siblings to have anxiety problems. The researchers hypothesised that a combination of environmental and genetic variables, such as elevated parental expectations and pressure to perform, may be to blame.

Another study revealed that firstborn children were more prone to suffer social anxiety, which was published in the Journal of Affective Disorders. The researchers hypothesised that this would result from a confluence of genetic and environmental variables, including the fact that firstborn infants frequently receive more parental attention and can experience more societal pressure.

Being a secondborn child does not always imply anxiety. Birth order can affect a person's behaviour and personality, but it has no bearing on how their mental health will develop. However, some data suggests that secondborn kids could be more anxious than first- or later-born kids. This might be caused by a variety of elements, including parental attention, sibling rivalry, or personality traits. As an illustration, secondborn children may experience greater competition for their parent's time, which may make them feel uneasy or uncomfortable. They could also be more inclined to hold themselves to a higher standard than their elder siblings and feel under pressure to match their accomplishments.

Relation between birth order and social intelligence

There has been some study on the connection between social IQ and birth order, but the findings are conflicting.

In certain research, social intelligence is shown to be greater in firstborn children, whereas in other studies, social intelligence is found to be higher in children born later. Moreover, several studies have found no evidence of a connection between social IQ and birth order.

Firstborn children often spend more one-on-one time with their parents throughout their early years, which can help them develop better social abilities. This could be one reason why firstborn children have higher social intelligence. Further enhancing their social intelligence are the leadership positions that firstborn children may assume within their families.

On the other side, children who were born later could have more chances to socialise with their classmates and learn social skills via play and other activities. Kids could gain from studying and imitating the social relationships of their bigger siblings.

It's crucial to remember that each individual is unique and that birth order is only one of many elements that might affect a person's social IQ. Environmental conditions, life experiences, and heredity are additional variables that might affect social intelligence.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Studies show inconsistent results regarding the relationship between birth order and psychological outcomes. Malik and Bashir (2022) found higher anxiety in firstborns, while Lam et al. (2016) reported higher anxiety in secondborns. Research by Singh and Kumar (2021) indicated that secondborns scored higher in social intelligence than firstborns. However, several studies found no statistically significant differences between groups (Rohrer et al., 2015; Grossmann et al., 2013).

On the social intelligence front, theories such as Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences and Sternberg’s Triarchic Theory emphasize interpersonal and practical intelligences as central to social navigation. Thorndike’s conceptualization of social intelligence includes empathy, perspective-taking, and impression management—all important for youth development.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives:

1. To study the difference in social intelligence of firstborn and secondborn senior secondary students.

2. To study the difference in anxiety of firstborn and secondborn senior secondary students.
3. To study the interaction effect of birth order and gender on the social intelligence.
4. To study the interaction effect of birth order and gender on the anxiety.

Hypotheses

1. There will be a significant difference in social intelligence of firstborn and secondborn.
2. There will be a significant difference in anxiety of firstborn and secondborn senior secondary students.
3. There is a significant interaction effect of birth order and gender on the social intelligence.
4. There is a significant interaction effect of birth order and gender on the anxiety.

Variables:

1. **Independent Variable**
   - Birth Order
2. **Dependent Variable**
   - Social Intelligence
   - Anxiety

Participants*:*

120 senior secondary students (60 firstborn and 60 secondborn; 30 males and 30 females in each group), aged 16–18 years, from a school in Faridabad, Haryana.

Design*:*

A 2×2 factorial design was used, analyzing independent (birth order and gender) and dependent (social intelligence and anxiety) variables.

Tools*:*

- **Social Intelligence Scale (SIS)** by Chadha & Ganesan (2009)
- **Sinha's Comprehensive Anxiety Test (SCAT)** by Sinha & Sinha

Procedure:

Ethical permissions were secured. Participants were briefed and were beforehand informed about their voluntary participation and that their test results would be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes only. Then they were assessed individually in controlled classroom environments. SPSS was used for statistical analysis, including independent t-tests and Two-Way ANOVA.

Statistical analysis:

The SPSS (statistical programme for social sciences) was used to analyse the data. Descriptive analysis of the data was collected for each variable as well as interactional effect was also seen. The statistical methods that were used were Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), where TWO WAY ANOVA was applied and INDEPENDENT SAMPLE t-test.

Independent samples t-test: This statistical tool can be used to compare the average scores of two independent groups (in this case, firstborn and secondborn students) on a continuous

variable (such as social intelligence or anxiety). This would allow you to determine whether there is a significant difference between the two groups.

Two-way Anova: this was used in order to understand the interception effect between gender, birth order and anxiety.

RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to understand the difference in the social intelligence and anxiety among the firstborn and secondborn senior secondary students, and here the results given provide a brief on my findings.

TABLE-1

CODES FOR VARIABLES	VARIABLES	GROUP STATISTICS				
		BIRTH_ ORDER	N	Average	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Average
D1	SOCIAL_ INTELLIGENCE	1ST CHILD	60	91.9000	9.81818	1.26752
		2ND CHILD	60	93.8333	10.11990	1.30647
D2	PATIENCE	1ST CHILD	60	17.22	2.293	0.296
		2ND CHILD	60	17.90	2.778	0.359
D3	COOPERATIVENESS	1ST CHILD	60	24.12	3.435	0.443
		2ND CHILD	60	24.22	2.998	0.387
D4	CONFIDENCE	1ST CHILD	60	17.15	2.881	0.372
		2ND CHILD	60	17.30	2.913	0.376
D5	SENSITIVITY	1ST CHILD	60	18.55	3.311	0.427
		2ND CHILD	60	18.78	3.130	0.404
D6	RECOGNITION _OF_ ENVIRONENT	1ST CHILD	60	1.55	0.852	0.110
		2ND CHILD	60	1.57	0.673	0.087
D7	TACTFULNESS	1ST CHILD	60	3.35	1.219	0.157
		2ND CHILD	60	3.35	1.055	0.136
D8	SENSE_OF_ HUMOUR	1ST CHILD	60	3.22	1.379	0.178
		2ND CHILD	60	3.77	1.598	0.206
D9	MEMORY	1ST CHILD	60	6.75	2.120	0.274
		2ND CHILD	60	6.95	1.935	0.250
D10	ANXIETY	1ST CHILD	60	49.12	10.975	1.417
		2ND CHILD	60	48.90	11.615	1.499

TABLE-2

	INDEPENDENT SAMPLE t-test					
VARIABLES	**F**	**t**	**df**	**p-value**	**Average Difference**	**Std. Error Difference**
SOCIAL_INTELLIGENCE	0.315	1.062	118	0.290	-1.93333	1.82030
PATIENCE	2.058	1.469	118	0.144	-0.683	0.465
COOPERATIVENESS	1.079	0.17	118	0.865	-0.100	0.589
CONFIDENCE	0.012	0.284	118	0.777	-0.150	0.529
SENSITIVITY	0.002	0.397	118	0.692	-0.233	0.588
RECOGNITION_OF_ENVIRONENT	3.869	0.119	118	0.906	-0.017	0.140
TACTFULNESS	0.844	0.000	118	1.000	0.000	0.208
SENSE_OF_HUMOUR	0.979	2.018	118	0.046	-0.550	0.273
MEMORY	0.389	0.54	118	0.590	-0.200	0.371
ANXIETY	0.001	0.105	118	0.917	0.217	2.063

The above data provides the whole data for the firstborn and secondborn students in each dimension of social intelligence as well as complete data for overall social intelligence and anxiety. The data provided also brings into light the outcomes of a **t-test analysis** comparing various variables between firstborn and secondborn children. The sample size for each comparison is 60, and the T-test value, degrees of freedom (DF), and P-value are given for each comparison.

Table 3 and 4: Average, sd, t-test value for all dimensions of social intelligence and anxiety among male and female (*significant at the 0.05 level)

TABLE -3

CODE FOR VARIABLES		**GROUP STATISTICS**				
	VARIABLES	**GENDER**	**N**	**Average**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Average**
D1	**SOCIAL_ INTELLIGENCE**	MALE	60	90.0833	8.40962	1.08568
		FEMALE	60	95.6500	10.68791	1.37980
D2	**PATIENCE**	MALE	60	17.17	2.430	0.314
		FEMALE	60	17.95	2.645	0.342
D3	**COOPERATIVENESS**	MALE	60	23.22	3.087	0.399
		FEMALE	60	25.12	3.070	0.396
D4	**CONFIDENCE**	MALE	60	16.95	2.925	0.378
		FEMALE	60	17.50	2.843	0.367
D5	**SENSITIVITY**	MALE	60	17.38	2.912	0.376

TABLE -3

CODE FOR VARIABLES		GROUP STATISTICS				
	VARIABLES	GENDER	N	Average	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Average
		FEMALE	60	19.95	2.994	0.387
D6	RECOGNITION_OF_ ENVIRONENT	MALE	60	1.62	0.761	0.098
		FEMALE	60	1.50	0.770	0.099
D7	TACTFULNESS	MALE	60	3.23	1.140	0.147
		FEMALE	60	3.47	1.127	0.145
D8	SENSE_OF_HUMOUR	MALE	60	3.38	1.263	0.163
		FEMALE	60	3.60	1.729	0.223
D9	MEMORY	MALE	60	7.13	2.029	0.262
		FEMALE	60	6.57	1.995	0.258
D10	ANXIETY	MALE	60	48.55	11.148	1.439
		FEMALE	60	49.47	11.431	1.476

TABLE-4

	INDEPENDENT SAMPLE t-test					
VARIABLES	F	t	df	P value	Average DIFFERENCE	Std. Error Difference
SOCIAL_INTELLIGENCE	7.337	3.171	118	0.002	-5.56667	1.75572
PATIENCE	1.509	1.689	118	0.094	-0.783	0.464
COOPERATIVENESS	0.104	3.38	118	<.001	-1.900	0.562
CONFIDENCE	0.146	1.044	118	0.298	-0.550	0.527
SENSITIVITY	0.008	4.761	118	<.001	-2.567	0.539
RECOGNITION_OF_ENVIRONENT	0.003	0.835	118	0.406	0.117	0.140
TACTFULNESS	0.000	1.127	118	0.262	-0.233	0.207
SENSE_OF_HUMOUR	3.692	0.784	118	0.435	-0.217	0.276
MEMORY	0.243	1.543	118	0.126	0.567	0.367
ANXIETY	0.625	0.445	118	0.657	-0.917	2.061

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) testing the effects of gender and birth order on social intelligence

	Between-Subjects Factors		
	Value	**Label**	**N**
GENDER	1	MALE	60
	2	FEMALE	60
BIRTH_ORDER	1	1ST CHILD	60
	2	2ND CHILD	60

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for Social Intelligence as Dependent Variable

Dependent Variable: SOCIAL_INTELLIGENCE				
GENDER	**BIRTH_ORDER**	**Average**	**Std. Deviation**	**N**
MALE	1ST CHILD	89.8333	7.33947	30
	2ND CHILD	90.3333	9.48077	30
	Total	90.0833	8.40962	60
FEMALE	1ST CHILD	93.9667	11.55044	30
	2ND CHILD	97.3333	9.65020	30
	Total	95.6500	10.68791	60
Total	1ST CHILD	91.9000	9.81818	60
	2ND CHILD	93.8333	10.11990	60
	Total	92.8667	9.97554	120

Table 6: Mean SQ, DF, F Value and Significance (*Significant at the 0.05 level)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects				
Dependent Variable: SOCIAL_INTELLIGENCE				
Source	**df**	**Average Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Intercept	1	1034906.133	11179.353	<.001
GENDER	1	929.633	10.042	0.002
BIRTH_ORDER	1	112.133	1.211	0.273
GENDER * BIRTH_ORDER	1	61.633	0.666	0.416

The Table 6 suggests that the intercept is highly significant ($F = 11179.353$, $p < .001$), indicating that social intelligence levels are significantly different from zero. **The main effect of gender on social intelligence was also significant ($F = 10.042$, $p = 0.002$), suggesting that there are differences in social intelligence levels between males and females**. Specifically, the average score for females was higher than that of males. **However, the main effect of birth order on social intelligence was not significant, as the**

F-value did not exceed the critical value for significance (F = 1.211, p = 0.273) at the .05 level.

The interaction between birth order and gender was also found to show no significance, as the F-value did not exceed the critical value for significance (F = 0.666, p = 0.416) at the .05 level. This suggests that the relationship between gender and social intelligence does not depend on birth order.

In summary, the results suggest that **social intelligence levels differ between males and females**, with females having higher levels on average, **but there is no significant effect of birth order on social intelligence levels.** Additionally, there is **no evidence for a combined effect of gender and birth order on social intelligence levels.**

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) testing the effects of gender and birth order on anxiety

Between-Subjects Factors			
	Value	Label	N
GENDER	1	MALE	60
	2	FEMALE	60
BIRTH_ORDER	1	1ST CHILD	60
	2	2ND CHILD	60

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Anxiety as Dependent Variable

Dependent Variable: ANXIETY				
GENDER	**BIRTH_ORDER**	**Average**	**Std. Deviation**	**N**
MALE	1ST CHILD	50.47	9.058	30
	2ND CHILD	46.63	12.775	30
	Total	48.55	11.148	60
FEMALE	1ST CHILD	47.77	12.618	30
	2ND CHILD	51.17	10.031	30
	Total	49.47	11.431	60
Total	1ST CHILD	49.12	10.975	60
	2ND CHILD	48.90	11.615	60
	Total	49.01	11.252	120

*Table 8: MEAN SQ, DF, F Value and Significance (*Significant at the 0.05 level)*

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects				
Dependent Variable: ANXIETY				
Source	**df**	**Average Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Intercept	1	288218.008	2282.453	<.001
GENDER	1	25.208	0.200	0.656
BIRTH_ORDER	1	1.408	0.011	0.916
GENDER * BIRTH_ORDER	1	392.408	3.108	0.081

The Table 8 shows the results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) testing the effects of gender and birth order on anxiety levels. The dependent variable is anxiety, and the independent variables are gender and birth order, as well as their interaction.

The results suggest that the intercept is highly significant ($F = 2282.453$, $p < .001$), indicating that anxiety levels are significantly different from zero.

However, the main effects of gender and birth order on anxiety were not significant, as their F-values did not exceed the critical value for significance (0.200 for gender and 0.011 for birth order) at the .05 level.

The interaction between gender and birth order had an F-value of 3.108 and a p-value of 0.081, which is close to the significance level. This suggests that there may be a small effect of the interaction on anxiety levels, but further investigation is needed to confirm this.

In summary, the results suggest that **gender and birth order do not have a significant effect on anxiety level**s, but there may be a **small effect of the interaction between gender and birth order.**

DISCUSSION

The findings do not support the hypotheses regarding significant differences between firstborn and secondborn students in terms of social intelligence and anxiety. These results align with past studies such as Grossmann et al. (2013) and Rohrer et al. (2015), which emphasize that factors like parenting style, peer interaction, and environmental context may play a more critical role than birth order.

The only notable difference was found in the sense of humour domain, where secondborns outperformed firstborns—possibly due to increased social exposure through older siblings. Gender analysis revealed females scored higher on social intelligence, consistent with studies suggesting higher emotional and interpersonal skills among adolescent girls.

Limitations:

There are several limitations in studying the difference in social intelligence and anxiety in firstborn and secondborn senior secondary students. Some of these limitations include:

1. Small sample size: The study may have a limited number of participants, which can make it difficult to generalise the findings to the larger population. The sample size

should be large enough to achieve statistical significance and to account for individual differences.
2. Self-reported data: The study may rely on self-reported data, which may not accurately reflect the true level of social intelligence and anxiety. Participants may underreport or over-report their social skills and anxiety levels due to social desirability bias or other factors.
3. Limited scope: The study may only focus on a specific population or geographical area, which may limit the generalisability of the findings to other populations or contexts.
4. Lack of control: The study may not have control over extraneous variables that can influence the results, such as family dynamics, cultural background, or socioeconomic status.
5. Potential confounding factors: Birth order is just one factor that may impact social intelligence and anxiety. Other factors such as parenting style, peer relationships, and school environment may also contribute to the observed differences.

Suggestions for Future Researches:

1. SAMPLE SIZE: sample size taken was small therefore the results could have varied with a larger group of sample taken from different schools or areas and moreover it could have been used to generalise the findings.
2. INFLUENCE OF PARENTING STYLE: Investigate the effects of parenting style on social intelligence and anxiety in first- and secondborn senior secondary students in your study on the impact of parents. This might reveal any parenting-style disparities between the two groups and how these would affect the children's social skills and anxiety levels.
3. INFLUENCE OF PEER GROUP: Conduct a study on peer influence to learn how peers' attitudes towards social intelligence and anxiety affect first- and secondborn senior secondary students. This could reveal any variations in peer interactions between the two groups and how their social IQ and anxiety levels may be affected.
4. STUDY CULTURAL EFFECTS: Compare first- and secondborn senior secondary pupils from various cultural origins in a cross-cultural study. This might make it easier to pinpoint any cultural elements that can affect social aptitude and anxiety levels, as well as how birth order might affect these elements.

CONCLUSION

This study suggests that birth order does not significantly affect overall levels of social intelligence or anxiety among adolescents. Gender plays a more pronounced role in social intelligence but not in anxiety. The influence of birth order appears to be minimal, and broader social, familial, and personality factors likely play a larger role in adolescent psychological development.

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Conflict of Interest

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