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Effect of Birth Order on Locus of Control among Boys

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Abstract: Locus of Control means a person's expectations regarding the control upon various events that are happening in his/her life. It can affect the overall personality and the way one is looking at the world. The present side was designed to investigate the effect of birth order on locus of control. Data was collected from 200 boys, having age range of 22-25, out of which 100 boys are brought up without siblings and 100 boys are brought up with siblings. Levenson's Locus of Control Scale (1973) was used to measure the locus of control. Data was analysed on three factors: Powerful others, Chance control and Individual control. After using One Sample T Test, significant difference was found between the means of the two groups on all the three factors. The results showed that the boys who are brought up without siblings shows more internal locus of control whereas the boys who are brought up with siblings shows more external locus of control. Further, 100 boys who are brought up with siblings are divided into two groups- 50 boys who are first born and 50 boys who are latter born. After using One Sample T Test, here also, significant difference was found between the means of the two groups on all the three factors. The results showed that the boys who are first born tend to have more external locus of control whereas the boys who are latter born shows more internal locus of control. The data collected from the sample can be used to analyse the effect of birth order on locus of control, which is an important part of personality and influences the overall thinking process of the person.

Keywords: boys, personality, control, fate, others, individual, first born, latter born, siblings

I. INTRODUCTION

Locus of Control

The concept of "Locus of Control" was given by Rotter in the year 1960. He, initially, named his concept as "Locus of Reinforcement." Rotter actually tried to bridge the gap between Behavioural and Cognitive Psychology. He believed that behaviour was greatly guided by the use of reinforcements. It was believed that the punishments and rewards are the two things which helps in shaping the way, the people interpreted the results of their own actions.

Locus of control means a person's generalized expectations regarding where control over upcoming events resides. In other words, who is responsible for whatever is happening or what is responsible for the events that are occurring in his/her life. However, it is similar to, but distinct from, attributions.

According to Weiner, the Attribution Theory (1974) assumes that people try to determine what the people do and why they do that is attribute causes to the behaviour. Rotter's (1966) locus of control, originally classified generalized beliefs that are concerning to what or who influences things or events with a bipolar dimension from internal to external control of future outcomes resides primarily inside oneself while "external control" means expectancy that control is outside oneself, either in the control of others or due to fate or by chance.

According to Levenson's Model (1973), there are three independent dimensions: Internally, Chance, and Powerful Others. For example, a person might believe that both internal factors as well as outside factors (powerful others) can influence the outcomes, but chance does not have an effect. People with an internal locus of control believe that they have a control over their destiny. They believe that their experiences are controlled by their own skills and efforts. On the other hand, people who tend to have an external locus of control tend to attribute their experiences to chance, fate, or luck.

Birth Order

Birth order is believed to influence many aspects of one's personality. Alfred Adler was one of the first in the field of psychology to theorize about the differences birth order could make. Adler, the founder of Individual Psychology, was the first to discuss the influence of birth order on personality development. While he identified common characteristics and patterns for particular birth order positions, he emphasized how every person has a self-perceived place in his or her family. This perceived position may or may not be the person's chronological

place in the family. Alfred Adler believed that birth order had a direct association with personality characteristics. Personality theorists such as Adler have asserted that family position can affect individuals' experiences and development. It is believed that each birth order position has its own unique set of personality traits.

Firstborns are believed to be more conservative. They are viewed as leaders who follow rules. They submit to authority. They are often more ambitious than other birth order positions and also more conforming. Adler suggested that firstborns tend to be more motivated to achieve than later born. They are usually good at pleasing adults and behaving in socially appropriate ways. They typically adhere to rules and expect the same from others. They are also the dethroned child who must deal with the birth of a second sibling. Because of this, they work hard to stay ahead of the other siblings and keep their special place.

Youngest siblings are often viewed as pampered, dependent, immature, and irresponsible. They tend to be more sociable and usually get the most attention. Others often do things for them. They learn to use this to their advantage and often use charm and manipulation to get people to do things for them. Adler described only children as often being the centre of attention and striving for attention from adults more than peers.

Only children are often leaders and have a more difficult time going along with others, especially in groups of their peers. They typically carry feelings of entitlement. A typical characteristic of an only child is the carefulness that results from the extreme amount of attention they receive growing up. It is believed that independence, sociableness, responsibility, and thoughtfulness are qualities associated with the only child position. There has been extensive research into birth-order theory. Many studies look at how specific traits, such as intelligence or creativity, relate to birth order. Many of these studies have confirmed Adler’s theory in regard to specific traits.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a lot of debate among psychologists and child development experts about whether or not birth order has an impact on a child’s behaviour. In other words, there are some individuals who feels that whether any child is the oldest or youngest in his/her family, may determine some of his or her personal characteristics but there are other people who believes that these theories about the effect of birth order aren’t true. The real truth

is probably that the order of the birth can play a role in impacting the child's personality but it is not one factor that contribute to the total personality that the child develops (Lamb & Sutton-Smith,1982)

The oldest born and the only born are reported to take more internal responsibility for their actions (Falbo,1981). According to Falbo (1981), the oldest children had probably developed the sense of responsibility because most of times, they were put in charge and if anything, negative happens, they had no other sibling to blame things on.

Similarly, Phillips and Phillips (1994) found that only children tend to attribute to internal factors for others' job performance, as compared to the children brought up with siblings. First born and the only born weight lifters showed a more internal locus of control as well as a greater need for achievement than the later born (Hall et al. 1980).

Among Alumni of a social work college, only born felt that they had too much responsibility toward their families whereas child with siblings identified more with the role of the infantilized child (Lackie,1984). Other researchers also supported the idea that only children demonstrate more responsibility than the children with siblings (Hansson et al. 1978; Howrath,1980). In contrast, Walter and Ziegler (1980) found middle born to have a more internal locus of control than first or later born in families of three or more. They also found last born in larger families to show a more external locus of control than last born from smaller families.

In general, an external locus of control, the feeling that events are not under an individual's control, is thought to be largely the result of parental attention in childhood. A child receiving a great deal of parental attention looks to social approval for support rather than to himself, and this results in the development of a more external locus of control than children not receiving parental attention would have.

Studies using adult subjects have shown mixed support for this assertion. Eisenman and Platt (1968), Moran (1967), and Warren (1966) have concluded that first-born adults are more susceptible to social pressures and therefore more dependent than are later born, but Crandall, Katkovsky, and Crandall (1965) and MacDonald (1971) claim just the opposite.

Schildhaus (1974), using children as subjects, found that first-born children have a high need for social approval and a more external locus of control, whereas the opposite is true for later born. Newhouse (1974), on the other hand, found no significant locus-of-control difference between first- and later-born 9- to 10-year-

old children. In these studies, the number of siblings in families from which children were selected varied widely.

For example, in the MacDonald (1971) study, most first and later-born children were from two-sibling families; very few were from larger families. Newhouse (1974) and Schildhaus (1974), in contradictory studies, used some larger families, but both reported scores only for first- and later-born groups. Thus, any birth-order effects in later-born children were left untested. This is unfortunate, for there is reason to suspect that last-born children in large families might have a more external locus of control (due to parental attention) than middleborn children.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To study the difference in locus of control of boys brought up with siblings and boys brought up without siblings.
2. To study the difference in locus of control of boys who are first born and boys who are later born.

IV. HYPOTHESIS

1. There would be significant difference in powerful others factor of locus of control of boys brought up with siblings and boys brought up without siblings.
2. There would be significant difference in chance control factor of locus of control of boys brought up with siblings and boys brought up without siblings.
3. There would be significant difference in individual control factor of locus of control of boys brought up with siblings and boys brought up without siblings.
4. There would be significant difference in powerful others factor of locus of control of boys who are first born and boys who are later born.
5. There would be significant difference in chance control factor of locus of control of boys who are first born and boys who are later born.
6. There would be significant difference in individual control factor of locus of control of boys who are first born and boys who are later born.

V. METHODOLOGY

Sample Selection

For fulfilling the purpose of the study, 200 boys were included in the sample. The age range of boys who were included was 22-25 years (while filling the form). All boys were Graduates in different fields from various Universities of India. All the boys are students who are preparing for various competitive examinations (like UPSC and WBPSC) of India, so presently none of the female is employed. All the participants are getting coaching for Competitive Examinations from Online Applications or various Institutes of West Bengal.

The sample was divided into two groups- 100 boys who are brought up without siblings or can be said as who are single born, was included in first group and 100 boys who are brought up with siblings or who have elder or younger brother or sister, are included in the second group.

The second group was sub divided into two groups- 50 boys who are first born, are included in the first sub group and 50 boys who are latter born, are included in the second sub-group.

In case of the second group, only those boys who have only one sibling, either elder or younger, are included in the sample. Those boys who have more than one sibling, are excluded from the sample. Also, boys who belong to nuclear family was included in the sample, and those boys who belong to joint family are excluded from the sample, as the presence of cousin sister/brother in the family, can have an impact on the result of boys who are bought up without siblings.

Data Collection

- Data was collected Data was collected from **200 boys** with the help of **google form**.
- The form included three forms-

Form A: a consent of filling the form with their own will

Form B: with their personal details like name, age, gender, educational qualification, profession, number of siblings they have and whether they are firstborn or latter born or single child.

Form C: included the Levenson's Locus of Control Scale for measuring the locus of control.

Tools Used

- **Levenson's Locus of Control Scale**

The present scale is Likert type scale with multiple choice responses presented in a continuum. Responses range from strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree to strongly disagree.

In this five-point scale, the responses are weight from 1 to 5 as shown below:

5 Strongly agree

4 Agree

3 Undecided

2 Disagree

1 Strongly disagree

Initially 150 statements were selected with an attempt to cover the whole range, i.e., powerful others, chance control, and individual control. But the final scale consists of 24 statements, 8 each for powerful others (P), chance control (C), and individual control (I). This scale has been reliably used by various investigations. The test-retest reliability for the present scale with N=200, retested after one week time, was found to be 0.76, by calculating co-efficient between two sets of scores of the same individuals on the same scale.

Data Analysis

SPSS was used to analysed the data. One sample T test was used to compare the means and to check the level of significance for all the hypothesis.

VI. RESULTS

The first aim of the present study was to find out the difference in locus of control between boys brought up without siblings and boys brought up with siblings. After collecting data with the help of Leveson's Locus of Control Scale, and application of One Sample T Test, significance difference was found between the two groups.

The scale is divided into three factors or dimensions which are helpful in determining the conclusion that whether the person has internal locus of control or external locus of control. The three dimensions are Powerful Others, Chance Control and Individual Control.

Table 1 shows the Mean Score of Powerful Others Dimension in Locus of Control. It can be seen that the mean score of boys without siblings (20.33) is lower than mean score of boys with siblings (27.78). It implies that boys who are brought up with siblings, tend to believe that others have an impact on the consequences of events that are happening in their life. and Table 1 shows the level of significance which is less than 0.001 which means we can accept our hypothesis 1, which states that there would be significant difference in powerful others factor of locus of control of boys brought up with siblings and boys brought up without siblings

Table 1

		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error	t	df	p-value
Boys without Siblings	Powerful Others	100	20.33	6.44	0.64	31.55	99	0.00*
Boys with Siblings		100	27.78	6.78	0.68	40.98		
Boys without Siblings	Chance Control	100	26.09	6.93	0.69	37.66	99	0.00*
Boys with Siblings		100	15.26	5.81	0.58	26.28		
Boys without Siblings	Individual Control	100	23.35	6.21	0.62	37.62	99	0.00*
Boys with Siblings		100	17.29	6.20	0.61	27.88		

Note. ** p<0.01, *p<0.05

Table 1 shows the Mean Score of Chance Control Dimension in Locus of Control. It can be seen that the mean score of boys without siblings (26.09) is higher than mean score of boys with siblings (15.26). It implies that boys who are brought up without siblings, tend to believe that chance have an impact on the consequences of events that are happening in their life. and Table 1 shows the level of significance which is less than 0.001 which means we can accept our hypothesis 2, which states that there would be significant difference in chance control factor of locus of control of boys brought up with siblings and boys brought up without siblings.

Table 1 shows the Mean Score of Individual Control Dimension in Locus of Control. It can be seen that the mean score of boys without siblings (23.35) is higher than mean score of boys with siblings (17.29). It implies that boys who are brought up without siblings, tend to believe that they are themselves responsible for the consequences of events that are happening in their life and Table 1 shows the level of significance which is less than 0.001 which means we can accept our hypothesis 3, which states that there would be significant difference in individual control factor of locus of control of boys brought up with siblings and boys brought up without siblings.

The second aim of the present study was to find out the difference in locus of control between boys who are first born and boys who are latter born. After collecting data with the help of Leveson's Locus of Control Scale, and application of One Sample T Test, significance difference was found between the two groups.

Table 2 shows the Mean Score of Powerful Others Dimension in Locus of Control. It can be seen that the mean score of boys who are first born (33.98) is higher than mean score of boys who are later born (21.58). It implies that boys who are first born, tend to believe that others have an impact on the consequences of events that are happening in their life. and Table 2 shows the level of significance which is less than 0.001 which means we can accept our hypothesis 4, which states that there would be significant difference in powerful others factor of locus of control of boys who are first born and boys who are later born.

Table 2

		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error	t	df	p-value
First Borns	Powerful Others	50	33.98	2.59	0.36	92.45	49	0.00*
Later Borns		50	21.58	2.76	0.39	55.22		
First Borns	Chance Control	50	10.90	2.36	0.33	32.56	49	0.00*
Later Borns		50	19.62	4.86	0.68	28.49		
First Borns	Individual Control	50	12.10	2.04	0.28	41.88	49	0.00*
Later Borns		50	22.48	4.31	0.61	36.91		

Note. ** p<0.01, *p<0.05

Table 2 shows the Mean Score of Chance Control Dimension in Locus of Control. It can be seen that the mean score of boys who are first born (10.90) is lower than mean score of boys who are later born (19.62). It implies that boys who are latter born, tend to believe that chance or luck have an impact on the consequences of events that are happening in their life. and Table 2 shows the level of significance which is less than 0.001 which means we can accept our hypothesis 5, which states that there would be significant difference in chance control factor of locus of control of boys who are first born and boys who are later born.

Table 2 shows the Mean Score of Individual Others Dimension in Locus of Control. It can be seen that the mean score of boys who are first born (12.10) is lower than mean score of boys who are later born (22.48). It implies that boys who are latter born, tend to believe that they are themselves responsible for the consequences

of events that are happening in their life. and Table 12 shows the level of significance which is less than 0.001 which means we can accept our hypothesis 6, which states that there would be significant difference in individual control factor of locus of control of boys who are first born and boys who are later born.

VII. DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted with two main aims. First was to find out if there is any difference any locus of control between boys who are brought up without siblings and boys who are brought up with siblings. After analyzing the results, significant difference was found between the two groups.

The results showed that boys who are brought up without siblings tend to have more internal locus of control and boys who are brought up with siblings tend to have more external locus of control. That means boys who are brought up without siblings believe that their experiences are controlled by their own skills and efforts. Also, high score in chance control means that they believe that luck have a role in the events that are happening in their life. so, whatever is the series of events that would be happening in their life or that has already happened in their life, they would blame either themselves or their destiny or luck. In other words, it can be said that, if anything negative happens in their life, they would either say "I am the one who should be blame" or "I am unable to perform in the task" or would blame their luck, by saying, their luck does not favour them, or it was their destiny, so its better to accept.

Whereas boys with siblings, tend have more external locus of control. That means, they believe that others have an impact on the events of their life. This can be due to the fact that they always have someone to put the blame upon. They feel that others can control their destiny and can affect their future events.

Second aim of the study was to find whether there is any difference in locus of control of boys who are first born and boys who are later born. After analyzing the results, significant difference was found between the two groups.

First born were found to have external locus of control whereas the latter born were found to have internal locus of control. That means First born believes that others have a control over the consequences of the events of their life whereas the latter born believes that they are themselves responsible for the results. They did not blame others for the happenings of their life. Also, later born tend to believe that luck plays an important role

in determining the end product. They believe that chance or luck determines our destiny. Our results are also supported by D.Walter and C.A. Ziegler (1980) who have stated in their research that the first born are more external in large families.

First-born children receive more direct parental attention than later born, who must compete with siblings for such attention (Lasko, 1954; Sears, 1950) and are accordingly thought to develop a more external locus of control. Similar result was given by Schildhaus (1974), using children as subjects, found that first-born children have a high need for social approval and a more external locus of control, supporting our study.

VIII. FUTURE SCOPE

Further research can be done in this area with large sample size to have a higher confidence level. Also, other variables can be added to have a vast understanding of the individuals who are brought up with their siblings and those who are brought up without siblings. Also, middle born can be included in the birth order study, to elaborate the effect of birth order on locus of control. Since, only boys were included in the study, further study could be done, where males are also involved in the sample. Because of the familiar structure and dynamics, future research may benefit by doing research for birth order effects by comparing siblings of the same family.

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