UNDERSTANDING 'ELDEST DAUGHTER SYNDROME'

Deshna Chatterjee[1]

[1] Undergraduate Student, Department of Psychology, Asutosh College, University of Calcutta

ABSTRACT

Elder Daughter Syndrome (EDS) is a psychological and social phenomenon known to exert influence on firstborn daughters who endure incommensurate responsibilities within their families. To gain an understanding of the causes, manifestations, and impacts of EDS on mental health and socioemotional development, this review paper aims to synthesize the existing literature on the subject to provide a comprehensive overview. Drawing on research from the fields of anthropology, sociology, and psychology, the study examines how cultural, familial, and individual factors interact to cause EDS. Significant factors that shape the life of the eldest daughter include the roles that cultural standards, sibling interactions, and parental expectations play. Furthermore, the review emphasizes the psychological toll, including elevated levels of stress and anxiety, as well as the possible everlasting effects on self-worth and identity development. This study aims to give a thorough understanding of EDS by combining existing research and literature. This will allow healthcare professionals, educators, and legislators to assist those who are suffering.

Keywords: Elder Daughter Syndrome, psychological phenomenon, social phenomenon, firstborn daughters, family responsibilities, mental health, socio-emotional development, interdisciplinary perspectives, individual factors, cultural standards, sibling interactions, parental expectations, stress and anxiety, self-worth, and identity formation.

INTRODUCTION

Eldest Daughter Syndrome (EDS) is a psychosocial phenomenon characterized by a unique coalition of obligations and challenges that first-born daughters often encounter in their families. Behavioral, emotional, and social manifestations stemming from these expectations are encompassed by EDS, which is signified by the disproportionate caregiving and leadership roles they assume. Scholarly investigations indicate that eldest daughters often fulfill the roles of mentors, mediators in family dynamics, and second parents within their families, resulting in considerable strain and anxiety. Comprehending the Eldest Daughter Syndrome is essential for numerous reasons. Primarily, it illuminates the nuanced experiences of first-born daughters, who often shoulder intricate familial responsibilities that may impact their psychological well-being and social-

emotional growth. Research indicates that firstborn daughters are potentially more prone than their siblings to anxiety, perfectionism, and self-criticism (Borgstede, B. K., Girgis, H., Lyke, J., & Kalibatseva, Z. 2023). It is critical to identify these trends to create efficient support systems that can lessen the detrimental effects of EDS.

 In addition, a more thorough comprehension of EDS may modify parenting techniques and family dynamics, encouraging stronger ties and a more equitable division of duties among siblings (Friedman S.D. 1991). This review aims to accomplish three goals. Prioritizing the examination of individual, familial, and cultural influences on the development of EDS, the study first attempts to integrate the body of research on the disease's genesis. This entails looking at the sociocultural norms and historical background that have shaped the expectations of firstborn daughters (Arnett et al., 2020). Secondly, the review aims to clarify EDS symptoms and their effects on mental health and socio-emotional development. Behavioral and affective traits related to EDS are comprehensively summarized in this work, which integrates studies from anthropology, psychology, and sociology (Santos Pichini, F., Rodrigues, N. D. G. S., Ambrós, T. M. B., & de Souza, A. P. R. 2016). Through the consolidation of existing knowledge, the purpose of this study is to improve our comprehension of Eldest Daughter Syndrome and its consequences, which will ultimately lead to better health outcomes for eldest daughters worldwide.

ORIGINS OF ELDER DAUGHTER SYNDROME

The cultural conventions and conventional family structures of both Eastern and Western cultures have played a significant role in the development of the Eldest Daughter Syndrome (EDS). Traditionally, eldest daughters were expected to assume caregiving duties and responsibilities from an early age in numerous communities. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, eldest daughters in Western cultures frequently took on the role of surrogate mothers in large families, especially in rural areas where labor was rare and the mother's workload was significant (Hareven, 1977). Likewise, in Eastern societies, Confucian values prioritized filial piety and the hierarchy of the family, with the eldest females frequently shouldering major responsibilities to assist their parents and siblings (Chao, 1994). Literary works, legal frameworks, and educational resources all served to perpetuate these deeply ingrained historical expectations, which were not just unspoken. According to Davidoff and Hall (2018), Victorian novels, for instance, often portrayed eldest daughters as the primary caretakers and moral pillars. This portrayal reflected the ideal of society. Daughters' caregiving roles are reinforced in many Asian civilizations by historical texts and cultural narratives that extol the virtues of submissive and obedient daughters (Croll, 2000).

From an evolutionary perspective, the responsibilities that eldest daughters adopt integrate within a larger adaptive scheme. According to evolutionary psychology, older siblings who assist with caregiving during periods of resource shortage or high parental workload can improve the chances of younger siblings surviving, which will increase the family's overall reproductive success (Hrdy, 2009). According to this sibling caregiving model, eldest daughters are generally more mature and hence more qualified to assist with childcare and domestic chores, therefore they ultimately become "alloparents" (Konner, 2011). Cross-cultural studies corroborate this paradigm, demonstrating that older siblings—especially sisters—frequently assume caregiving responsibilities in a variety of settings, from agrarian communities to hunter-gatherer groups (Weisner & Gallimore, 1977). Based on the principle of kin selection, which promotes actions that increase the survival of close relatives, and the stability of these roles across cultures, it appears that the expectations placed on eldest daughters have an evolutionary basis (Hamilton, 1964).

The experiences of eldest daughters are greatly influenced by sociocultural variables. The Industrial Revolution and the ensuing changes in family relations in Western countries changed the conventional roles in the family unit. As family support networks contracted, eldest daughters' responsibilities increased with the

transition from extended to nuclear families (Laslett, 1972). Cherlin, A. J. (2012) noted that the necessity for eldest daughters to possess reliability and independence was further strengthened by the cultural emphasis on individualism and self-sufficiency. On the contrary hand, collectivist principles have affected Eastern societies, which still place a strong focus on family unity and dependency. Eldest daughters are frequently viewed as crucial players in upholding family unity and carrying out filial responsibilities in nations like China, Japan, and India (Shwalb et al., 2004). Education systems that place a strong emphasis on respect for elders and familial responsibilities, societal conventions, and media representations all contribute to the perpetuation of these cultural expectations (Kim et al., 2000). Furthermore, migratory patterns and globalization have brought new dimensions to the experiences of eldest daughters. As cultural mediators, eldest girls in immigrant families frequently strike a balance between adjusting to a new cultural context and traditional expectations (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). This dual function highlights the intricate interaction between conventional duties and contemporary difficulties, which in turn can increase the stress and responsibility they shoulder.

In conclusion, several historical, evolutionary, and sociocultural circumstances have a significant influence on the development of Eldest Daughter Syndrome. Comprehending these underpinnings is essential to acknowledge the enduring and diverse demands encountered by eldest daughters, which persistently mold their roles and experiences in disparate cultural contexts.

MANIFESTATIONS OF ELDER DAUGHTER SYNDROME

The expectations and duties placed on eldest daughters can form a variety of behavioral and emotional traits that are indicative of Eldest Daughter Syndrome (EDS). Both Eastern and Western cultures frequently exhibit these traits. From an early age, firstborn daughters typically display high degrees of maturity and responsibility in their behavior. They frequently take on caregiving responsibilities, doing domestic duties, and tending to younger siblings. The early adoption of adult-like tasks frequently results in the development of strong leadership and organizational abilities (Feinberg, M. E., McHale, S. M., & Whiteman, S. D. 2019). Nevertheless, it can also lead to overburdening, in which the eldest daughter becomes a workaholic and perfectionist because she feels compelled to excel in all areas (Chinoy F., 2017). Eldest daughters frequently endure elevated stress and anxiety levels on an emotional level. Their troubles may become internalized due to pressure to live up to high familial standards, which can lead to feelings of inadequacy and self-criticism. Research suggests that eldest girls could have anxiety disorders and depression at higher rates than their siblings. This could be related to their emotional burden of caring for others and their disproportionate obligations (Bigelow, D. 2016; Yue, A., Gao, J., Yang, M., Swinnen, L., Medina, A., & Rozelle, S. 2018).

Across various cultural contexts, eldest daughters exhibit several universal qualities and patterns. They consist of:

1. **Perfectionism and High Achievement-** In their academic and professional pursuits, the oldest daughters consistently aim for excellence. Due to their need to prove their value through accomplishments, they frequently have high expectations for themselves (Dweck, 2006).
2. **Caregiving and Nurturing-** A noteworthy characteristic of eldest daughters is their nurturing attitude. According to Teyber (2011), they often take on quasi-parental duties, offering their siblings direction and emotional support. The emphasis on familial interdependence found in collectivist cultures makes this caring characteristic more prominent (Kagitcibasi, 1996).
3. **Conflict Mediation-** To preserve peace and balance in the home, eldest daughters frequently find themselves serving as family mediators. Their emotional burden and sense of accountability for family dynamics might increase as a result of this role (Marsh, D. T., & Johnson, D. L. 1997).

4. **Independence and self-reliance-** An intense sense of independence and self-reliance is fostered by the duties imposed on eldest daughters. According to Bierema, L. L. 1998, they acquire the skill of effective task management and frequently assume leadership positions both inside and outside the family.

5. **Self-sacrifice and suppression of needs-** The requirements of their family often come before their own, which causes the oldest daughters to self-sacrifice and repress their goals and wants. Long-term discontent and burnout may result from this pattern (Levine, 2008).

In addition to underlining the universal and culturally distinctive components of EDS, case studies and anecdotal evidence offer a greater insight into the lived experiences of eldest daughters. Case studies frequently highlight the difficulties experienced by eldest daughters in dual-income households with working parents in Western countries. An academic case study of a family in the United States, for instance, described how the oldest daughter, Brianna, took on major caregiving duties for her younger siblings while still doing exceptionally well in school. Despite Brianna appearing successful, she was plagued by persistent tension and anxiety due to her overwhelming responsibilities as both a caregiver and a student (Capannola, A. L., & Johnson, E. I., 2022). Anecdotal evidence is often used in Eastern cultures to highlight the familial expectations that are put on eldest daughters. In a Chinese case study, Li Mei, the oldest child in a conventional family, was expected to take care of her elderly parents, oversee domestic duties, and assist her younger siblings with their schooling. Li Mei experienced emotional weariness as a result of these responsibilities, which were based on the filial piety ideals of Confucianism and left her with little time for her hobbies (Fung, J., Wong, M. S., & Park, H., 2018). Further illuminating the complex issues faced by immigrant households are interviews with their eldest daughters. A study conducted in the UK with the eldest daughters of South Asian immigrant households revealed how these people managed to balance the demands of maintaining their cultural customs with adjusting to Western societal norms. This dualism frequently led to an increased sense of accountability and conflicting identities (Brah & Phoenix, 2004).

Thus, although increased emotional strain and responsibility are common characteristics of Eldest Daughter Syndrome, certain cultural expectations and family dynamics significantly influence its manifestations. Comprehending these expressions offers significant insights into the assistance required to address the distinct obstacles encountered by eldest daughters worldwide.

IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

The Eldest Daughter Syndrome (EDS) has a substantial negative influence on mental health, especially when it pertains to heightened stress and anxiety levels. Taking on caregiving obligations and handling home responsibilities, the eldest daughters are frequently under extreme pressure to live up to the high expectations of their families. This chronic weight can cause chronic stress, which can harm one's physical and emotional well-being if left unaddressed (Carter 1999 & McGoldrick, 2015). Empirical evidence suggests that anxiety is exacerbated in firstborn daughters due to their elevated feeling of duty and perfectionism craving. Bigelow (2016) conducted a study that revealed that eldest girls experience elevated levels of anxiety in comparison to their siblings. The study attributed this phenomenon to the stress of managing several roles. Anxiety symptoms may worsen as a result of the strain of juggling work or school obligations with family obligations, which can cause feelings of inadequacy and overwhelm. These pressures are heightened in Eastern cultures by the notion of filial piety. It's common for the oldest daughters to be expected to protect family honor and provide for their parents and younger siblings. Since falling short of these expectations is viewed as a personal and familial failure, this cultural expectation can induce a permanent state of tension and alertness.

Depression and exhaustion can result from eldest daughters' high expectations and protracted stress. Embracing stress and living with a persistent sense of failure to live up to the high expectations placed on them by their families or themselves are common causes of depression among firstborn daughters. Chronic sorrow, low self-esteem, and a persistent sense of hopelessness can arise from this. Eldest girls are also more likely to experience burnout, which is a condition of extreme emotional, bodily, and mental tiredness brought on by extended stress. Fatigue, irritation, and a detached feeling from obligations are some of the signs of burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2018). Levine's (2008) study revealed that burnout was more common among eldest daughters in high-achieving households because of their ongoing need to balance many tasks and their unwavering quest for excellence. Burnout may worsen in cross-cultural situations for eldest daughters from collectivist civilizations. Added societal pressure to preserve family unity and assist members of the extended family might exacerbate feelings of emotional weariness and depletion (Kagitcibasi, 1996). For instance, the pressure to achieve academic excellence while carrying out traditional caregiving responsibilities falls disproportionately on eldest girls in Asian families, increasing the likelihood of burnout (Wong, 2018).

The oldest daughters frequently acquire a variety of coping strategies to handle their stress and duties despite serious mental health issues. By encouraging resilience and overall well-being, effective coping mechanisms can lessen the detrimental effects of EDS on mental health. The acquisition of good organizing abilities is one typical coping technique. To successfully manage their varied duties, oldest daughters frequently learn to prioritize work, use time wisely, and set reasonable goals. Their ability to handle stress and feel less overwhelmed is enhanced by this proactive approach. A crucial additional coping mechanism is to look for social support. Daughters who are the oldest and have networks of friends, relatives, or mentors to lean on are more resilient to stress and anxiety. Emotional affirmation, useful aid, and a sense of community are all provided by social support, and these factors are critical for mental health (Cutrona & Russell, 1990). To manage the effects of EDS on mental health, self-care activities are very crucial. According to Grossman et al. (2004), oldest daughters can gain from scheduling leisure activities including hobbies, exercise, and mindfulness exercises that encourage introspection and relaxation. Engaging in these activities can lower stress and enhance mental wellness in general. In certain instances, seeking professional assistance from counselors or therapists is imperative to manage extreme stress, anxiety, and despair. According to Hofmann et al. (2012), eldest daughters can benefit from many treatments such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) to enhance their ability to manage stress, reframe negative beliefs, and create healthier coping mechanisms.

SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The roles that eldest daughters assume within their families tremendously impact their socio-emotional development and shape how they build their identities. The oldest daughters frequently form an identity strongly associated with their leadership and caring roles. Social standards that value accountability, reliability, and altruism, as well as family expectations, serve to reinforce this identity (Bigelow, 2016). Studies show that oldest daughters frequently internalize their jobs as caregivers as a fundamental part of who they are, which results in a strong sense of obligation and dedication to their families (Bigelow, 2016). Positive characteristics like fortitude, empathy, and leadership abilities may be fostered by this. It can also lead to a limited sense of self when family responsibilities take precedence over individual goals and aspirations. Particularly in societies that place a strong emphasis on filial piety and collectivist ideals, oldest girls may find it difficult to develop their own identity separate from their family responsibilities (Kim et al., 2000). Elderly daughters may feel torn between their personal goals and their identity as caregivers in Western countries, where individualism is valued more highly. They may experience internal conflict as they attempt to strike a balance between their responsibilities within the family and their aspirations outside of it (Lamb & Sutton-Smith, 2014). As opposed to this, people's sense of self and their familial identity may become more

strongly aligned in Eastern cultures due to the focus placed on family harmony and communal well-being (Chao, 1994).

The perception of eldest daughters' efficacy in accomplishing their tasks is closely associated with their sense of self-worth and self-esteem. Elevated anticipations and the drive to succeed in providing care and fulfilling other obligations may result in conditional self-worth, where an individual's value is linked to their accomplishments and capacity to fulfill the expectations of their family (Bigelow, 2019). Research has demonstrated that when eldest daughters believe they are fulfilling their obligations well, they frequently have high levels of self-esteem (Luthar & Barkin, 2012). Nevertheless, this self-worth is brittle and dependent on external validation from relatives and society acceptance. Self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy can plummet significantly when these high criteria are not met (Mitchell K., 2022). Self-worth and self-esteem are greatly influenced by cultural background. The focus on family roles in collectivist societies can result in a deeper sense of alignment between an individual's self-worth and family approbation. According to Kagitcibasi (1996), the oldest daughters' contributions to the welfare of the family may account for a substantial share of their self-esteem. In contrast, in cultures that value individualism, the pressure to fulfill both familial and personal obligations can result in a more fractured sense of self-worth, where a lack of success in one area can have a significant negative impact on one's feeling of self-worth in general.

The caring responsibilities and expectations placed on eldest daughters have a significant impact on their interpersonal connections. As the head caretakers and family mediators, eldest daughters frequently acquire sophisticated interpersonal abilities like empathy, communication, and conflict resolution (Teyber, 2006). These abilities can help them build solid, encouraging friendships and professional networks that will benefit their relationships outside of the family. Nonetheless, troubled relationships may also result from the demanding responsibilities of their parental obligations. According to Ainsworth M.D. 1985, eldest daughters may find it difficult to build and sustain relationships that do not entail leadership or caring responsibilities. This can result in unbalanced dynamics where they are constantly the ones providing support rather than receiving it. The eldest daughters' experience may also apply to romantic relationships, as they may find it difficult to find partners who will provide them with the same degree of attention and support that they are accustomed to providing (L.L. Bierema, 1998). The focus placed by families on responsibility and support can spread to larger social networks in collectivist cultures, where eldest daughters continue to assume major caregiving responsibilities. It may result in feelings of loneliness and unmet emotional needs as a result of this limiting their chances for reciprocal interactions (Wang, 2018). However, in cultures that value individualism, the desire for autonomy and personal achievement may conflict with their deep-rooted inclination to provide care for others, leading to conflict in interpersonal relationships (Eisenberg, 2015). In general, the intricate interaction between identity formation, self-esteem, and interpersonal connections characterizes the socio-emotional development of eldest daughters. These characteristics are greatly influenced by the demands and obligations that individuals have within their families, with notable differences depending on the cultural setting.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

The emergence and maintenance of Eldest Daughter Syndrome (EDS) are significantly influenced by parental expectations. The eldest daughter is typically viewed as a secondary caregiver and a role model for younger siblings in traditional family systems, which gives rise to these expectations. Parents in both Eastern and Western cultures frequently have high expectations for their eldest daughters in terms of their responsibility, diligence, and caring skills. In Western cultures, parents' expectations may take the shape of domestic duties, extracurricular activities, and academic success. For instance, a 2003 study by Lareau revealed how middle-class American parents frequently subject their eldest daughters to rigorous parenting techniques, such as

demanding participation in organized activities and high standards for academic achievement. Parental expectations are greatly impacted by cultural values like filial piety and family honor in Eastern cultures, especially in collectivist societies. According to Ho (1994), the oldest daughters are supposed to take care of their younger siblings, help out around the house, and provide emotional and material support for their family members. This expectation stems from the Confucian concepts of respect for elders and family hierarchy, which define the duties and tasks of family members (Chao, 1994). As they work to satisfy these expectations while frequently stifling their own goals and aspirations, their eldest daughters may experience severe stress and strain as a result of their high parental expectations. A conditional sense of self-worth, anxiety, and perfectionism can all be exacerbated by internalizing these expectations (Smith A.W., 2013).

A further crucial element in the development of EDS is sibling relations. Taking on obligations that mold their interactions with their siblings and impact their socio-emotional development, the oldest daughters frequently adopt a quasi-parental role. Elder daughters are often responsible for taking care of their younger siblings in both Eastern and Western families; this can develop a strong feeling of leadership and responsibility (L.L. Bierema, 1998). In addition to improving their resilience, organizational abilities, and empathy, this caring role can have a favorable developmental influence (Bigelow, 2016). Nevertheless, it can also result in fatigue and role overload, particularly if the oldest daughter believes she is the only one responsible for her siblings' welfare. Sibling relations may also entail comparison and rivalry. Parents may compare their children's accomplishments and conduct, which puts more pressure on the oldest daughter to lead by example and uphold high standards (Bigelow, 2019). This contrast may cause tension in sibling relationships by igniting competition or anger. The eldest daughter's function in sibling interactions is more highlighted in collectivist cultures. In addition to upholding family customs and mediating disputes, she is frequently expected to support her siblings' academic and professional choices (Kagitcibasi, 1996). Her deep engagement may be a hindrance to her development and possibilities because she is still primarily concerned with her siblings' well-being.

Cultural expectations and conventions have a big impact on eldest daughters' experiences and expectations, which shapes how EDS manifests differently in different cultural situations. Western civilizations place great importance on autonomy and independence. Although firstborn daughters may benefit from these ideals by being encouraged to follow their dreams and become independent, there may be conflict between these beliefs and family obligations (Lamb & Sutton-Smith, 2017). Western eldest daughters may find it difficult to strike a balance between the need to assist their family and their drive for personal success, which can cause stress and internal conflict. In contrast, eastern cultures place a strong emphasis on filial piety, family unity, and collectivism. The eldest daughter's duty as a caretaker and keeper of family honor is highly valued in these cultural norms (Kim et al., 2000). Oldest daughters are typically expected to care for aging relatives, live with their parents until marriage, and preserve tight family ties in civilizations such as China, Japan, and Korea (Chao, 1994). Their independence and chances for self-fulfillment may be severely restricted by these societal standards. The social views of the eldest daughters are also influenced by cultural conventions. Many Eastern countries view the behavior and success of the eldest daughter as an indication of the honor and ideals of the family. As eldest daughters balance the competing demands of family responsibilities and personal success, this social pressure might make them feel more stressed and anxious (Wong, 2018). The experiences of firstborn daughters are shaped by a variety of elements that collectively impact their mental health, socio-emotional development, and general well-being. These factors include sibling interactions, parental expectations, and cultural norms and values.

INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

From a psychological standpoint, a variety of emotional and cognitive experiences shaped by expectations and duties within the family are included in the Eldest Daughter Syndrome (EDS). Psychologists study the effects of these roles on behavior patterns, personality development, and mental health. In Western cultures, the psychological effects of EDS frequently center on the strain of juggling several responsibilities. According to Luthar and Barkin (2012), the oldest daughters often struggle with anxiety and perfectionism because they feel pressure to perform well in school and on the job and to balance their family obligations. As a result, coping strategies like strict self-control and elevated standards of oneself may emerge. While these strategies may be useful in certain situations, they can exacerbate melancholy and burnout if left uncontrolled (Smith A.W., 2013). Eastern cultures' psychological perspectives on EDS emphasize the significance of filial devotion and collectivist principles. Strong senses of obligation and self-sacrifice can result from the expectation to put family needs first. This can help build resilience and a sense of purpose, but when personal goals collide with family responsibilities, it can also lead to feelings of shame and inadequacy (Kim et al., 2000). Furthermore, the assimilation of these anticipations may impact the development of identity and self-esteem, since the eldest daughters frequently gauge their worth based on their capacity to fulfill responsibilities to their families (Wong, 2018).

Sociologists study EDS by looking at social roles, institutions, and relationships in families and society at large. They investigate how the experiences of eldest daughters are shaped by family dynamics and cultural norms. Sociological analysis of EDS in Western nations frequently concentrates on the evolving gender roles and family systems. Changes in conventional caregiving roles have resulted from the rise of dual-income families and the growing emphasis on gender equality. Nonetheless, as a result of enduring gender stereotypes and expectations, eldest daughters continue to often shoulder an excessive amount of household duties (Bigelow, 2016). Sociological research highlights the significance of resolving these disparities to encourage more harmonious support networks and family dynamics (Smith, 2013). The impact of conventional gender roles and extended family networks on EDS is highlighted by sociological viewpoints on Eastern cultures. Cultural norms and expectations strengthen the role of oldest daughters as primary caretakers in multigenerational households. Sociologists study how values are passed down through generations and how socialization processes maintain these roles (Kagitcibasi, 1996). Additionally, they examine how modernity and shifting social mores have affected these conventional roles, pointing out that expectations for eldest daughters are progressively changing due to social and economic developments (Wong, 2018).

Understanding EDS in a broader cultural and historical context is made possible by anthropologists, who investigate how historical events, cultural norms, and rituals influence eldest daughters' experiences in various countries. Anthropological perspectives on gender roles and family structures in Western cultures tend to center on the historical development of these concepts. The transition from large to nuclear families, together with the effects of urbanization and industrialization, have changed the composition of families and the roles that caregivers play. The intricate interplay between modern individualistic ideas and traditional expectations that the oldest daughters negotiate in contemporary Western society frequently results in difficulties and tensions in their responsibilities (Eisenberg, 2015). Anthropologists examine how engrained cultural traditions and beliefs affect the status of eldest daughters in Eastern civilizations. For instance, eldest daughters' significance in preserving family lineage and harmony is emphasized by rituals and traditions in many Asian countries (Chao, 1994). Anthropologists investigate how the norms of the community perpetuate these cultural practices and the effects this has on the socioemotional growth of eldest daughters. They also look at how conventional roles are being impacted by globalization and cross-cultural interchange, which is rearranging expectations and duties (Kim et al., 2000).

LONG TERM IMPLICATIONS

Eldest Daughter Syndrome (EDS) has a complex long-term effect on career and professional life, affecting the chances and difficulties that eldest daughters confront as they pursue their careers. The nurturing responsibilities that the oldest daughters undertake can help them develop strong leadership qualities, accountability, and a strong work ethic that will benefit them in their subsequent careers. Research indicates that daughters who are the oldest are often better leaders and managers because of their organizational and multitasking skills, which are developed via family obligations (Smith, 2013). These abilities can result in success in the workplace and early career advancement (Bigelow, 2016). But in addition to creating workaholism and perfectionism, the high standards and self-imposed pressures can also raise the risk of burnout. The oldest daughters may find it difficult to delegate and set limits because they feel pressured to take on more than their fair share of work obligations (Luthar & Barkin, 2012). Furthermore, juggling continuing family responsibilities with job goals can be psychologically taxing, which can impede career advancement and limit prospects for professional growth (Smith, 2013). Stress and anxiety levels can rise significantly in Western cultures due to the combined pressures of family support and career success. Eastern cultures prioritize domestic responsibilities over job advancement, which can negatively impact the eldest daughters' long-term professional development (Wong, 2018).

EDS has a significant effect on adult relationships and family dynamics; it frequently shapes how eldest daughters relate to their partners, kids, and other family members. Typically, eldest daughters take on the major role of caregiver in their own families and continue to carry this position into adult relationships. This may result in unbalanced partnerships in which they give more assistance than they receive, which may cause them to feel resentful and frustrated. Oldest daughters may find it difficult to rely on others due to their deep-rooted sense of duty, which can make it difficult to build mutually beneficial relationships (L.L. Bierema., 1998). Childhood expectations and relational patterns can carry over into romantic relationships. To reinforce their caregiving tendencies, the oldest daughters may find themselves drawn to partners who expect them to take on supportive and affectionate duties. Relationship strain may result from this, making it more difficult to form equitable partnerships (White, 2015). Concerning expectations for both themselves and their offspring, firstborn daughters frequently imitate the dynamics of the homes in which they were raised. This may prolong stressful cycles of high expectations within the family (Kagitcibasi, 1996).

EDS has significant long-term effects on mental health, which frequently show up as persistent tension, anxiety, and other psychological disorders. The cumulative effect of high expectations and familial responsibilities can cause chronic stress and worry, which can have a major negative effect on mental health. The constant obligation to measure up to both personal and familial standards put the oldest daughters at risk for mental health issues like depression and burnout (Luthar & Barkin, 2012). Research has demonstrated that the psychological effects of caring responsibilities can last into adulthood, impacting happiness and general well-being (White, 2013). The development of coping techniques in response to EDS may involve compulsive control and perfectionism, both of which can heighten feelings of stress and anxiety. Although these coping mechanisms are helpful at first, they can eventually turn detrimental, making it challenging to cope with stress and preserve mental health (L.L. Bierema., 1998). Family responsibilities are highly valued in collectivist cultures, which may exacerbate mental health issues. In addition to adversely impacting their mental health, oldest daughters may feel guilty and ashamed if they perceive they cannot live up to their family's expectations (Wong, 2018). In contrast, the conflict between family responsibilities and personal goals in individualistic cultures can cause a great deal of stress and identity issues, which can harm mental health outcomes (Kim et al., 2000). The necessity for supporting treatments and measures to assist eldest daughters in managing their duties and maintaining their well-being is highlighted by the long-term effects of EDS.

CONCLUSION

Eldest Daughter Syndrome (EDS) is a complex condition that involves many different social, psychological, and cultural aspects. The current review paper has compiled the body of literature to offer a thorough overview of EDS, emphasizing its causes, symptoms, and long-term effects. Sibling interactions, societal norms, and parental expectations all have a bearing on the disproportionate number of familial tasks that the oldest daughters typically endure. Their employment decisions, interpersonal relationships, and general well-being can all be impacted by these demands, which can also have a major negative impact on their mental health and socioemotional development as adults. EDS has been linked psychologically to stress, anxiety, perfectionism, and burnout. Anthropological viewpoints offer a more comprehensive cultural and historical backdrop, while sociological views highlight the influence of gender norms and family structures on the lives of eldest daughters. EDS has significant long-term effects that affect adult relationships, professional avenues, and mental health for the rest of one's life. It is essential to comprehend EDS to create interventions and support systems that are effective. Clinicians, educators, and policymakers must acknowledge the distinct obstacles encountered by eldest daughters and strive towards cultivating more positive family dynamics. Potential avenues for future research include examining various cultural contexts and devising methods to mitigate the challenges posed by EDS to close the gaps in the existing body of knowledge. We can provide eldest daughters with more assistance in attaining balance and well-being, enabling them to flourish in both their personal and professional lives, by addressing the intricate interplay of factors that contribute to EDS. This thorough comprehension of EDS not only emphasizes the importance of awareness and empathy but also opens the door to practical remedies that can improve the lives of eldest daughters globally.

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