COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PERSONALITY CORRELATES OF SINGLE CHILDREN AND CHILDREN WITH SIBLINGS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out personality difference between the adolescents who are 'single children' and adolescents who have siblings. High School Personality Questionnaire(HSPQ) was used to find out whether these two groups differ on the 14 factors measured by HSPQ. Warmth, Intelligence, Emotional Stability, Excitability, Dominance, Cheerfulness, Conformity, Boldness, Sensitivity, Withdrawal, Apprehension, Self-Sufficiency, Self-Discipline, and Tension are the 14 factors which were examined. Students from different schools and cities were randomly selected and HSPQ was administered on them. T test was used to find out the significant difference.

KEYWORDS- *Single Children, Sibling Children, Adolescent students, Personality Correlates, High School Personality Questionnaire.*

INTRODUCTION

India is recognized all over the world as the second most populated country. Large families have always been strongly emphasized in India. However new social and demographic trends are emerging as India is the fastest growing economy. Many more Indian women are marrying later inlife. There is an increasing population who decide to have a single child instead of the traditional practice of "HUM DO HAMARE DO". Delhi-based National Council of Applied Economic Research reported that 10 per cent of households are opting to have only one child, and nearly a quarter of college-educated women say they would prefer to have a singleton. (Lambert, 2013)

The dilemma of single child, the social pressure to have another child creates stress on the parents. At the same time as the child grows, he goes through a period of loneliness. Many times both the parents are working and have little time, patience and energy to give to the child.'Single children' face a mixed bag of perception in the society regarding their personality. The most popular misunderstanding is they become selfish, lack social skills, are spoiled brats, little emperors, etc. but some people have positive approach as well.As the percentage of large families is more than small families in India, single child compares himself with other kids who have siblings. Feelings of jealousy, loneliness, boredom, pressure of parental expectation, overindulgence of parents,these are some of the issues of concern for the 'single children'.If these issues are not handled properly by parents what impact does this creates on the child? Does it affect their socialization? Does it harm their personality? Does it harm their cognitive abilities? How do they handle their intimate relationships? Does that lead to dependency on friends? Can this loneliness lead to depression? There are so many questions that need attention by the researchers.

This study tries to find out whether there is any impact on their personality because of the unique family set up that the single child lands into. HSPQ helps to explore many dimensions of personality of the child including warmth, intelligence, emotional stability, excitability, dominance, cheerfulness, conformity, boldness, sensitivity, withdrawal,

apprehension, self-sufficiency, self-discipline, and tension.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Granville Stanley Hall, an American psychologist and researcher, first explored how 'single children' were "different" back in 1895. Hall sent out a survey for educators and physicians to describe unusual children, and the results were published by his protégée, E.W. Bohannon, in 1896. Bohannon's "A Study of Peculiar and Exceptional Children" concluded that 'single children' (who made up 46 of the 1,045 children surveyed) were more likely to be peculiar, ugly, poorly behaved, and stupid. It's important to note that in the 19th century having many children was the norm, while 'single children' were fairly rare. Dr. Mark Banschick explains that families with only one child were more likely to be dysfunctional due to health (both physical and mental) issues, which could have a negative effect on raising children. Regardless of rationale, Hall and Bohannon's work effectively created the myth of the socially inept and bratty single child.

(Breene, 2013)In 1988, Falbo and co-researcher Denise Polit tackled an enormous project: Theyanalyzed 115 studies pertaining to children and families from 1925 to 1988 from the United States and Canada, including children from all racial, socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds. At the end of this review, they determined that 'single children' are not actually selfish, emotionally stunted freakazoids. In fact, 'single children' often scored higher for self-esteem and academic achievement than peers who grow up in more crowded households. Falbo and Polit's findings opened the door for scientists and researchers to challenge the myth of the single child. Research conducted by Falbo (Brophy, 1989) found that Chinese 'single children' fared no worse in personality or achievement than their counterparts with siblings. However, 'single children' are also often seen as high-achieving, motivated, and successful. (Eischen)The results of 1987 survey of 1,460 schoolchildren and their parents and teachers, in the urban and rural areas of Changchun, a large industrial city in Jilin Province in northeastern China, contain many findings similar to those of surveys in the West, with one exception. Among urban children, those without siblings have higher academic scores than those with siblings, but these advantages are not found among rural children. Moreover, when 'single children' are compared to firstborns, no differences are found once appropriate background controls are introduced. Also consistent with Western results, 'single children' do not appear to differ from children with siblings in terms of personality dimension representing childhood adjustment in China, as judged by both their mothers and teachers. (Dudley L. Poston)

An Ohio State survey of more than 13,000 children found that 'single children' had as many friends as anyone else; many of the 'single children' interviewed had cherished and nurtured friendships that they often regarded with a familial sense of permanence and loyalty.MedIndia studied the single child Syndrome when they surveyed adult 'single children' between the ages of 18 and 45. The results included responses such as:
• Anxiety over caring for aging parents
• Bitterness over having to make difficult life choices based on their single child status
• A feeling of being smothered by their parent's overwhelming love and attention.
• Experiencing a lot of repressed anger- not being able to express it for fear of upsetting or hurting parents.
• Missing something unknown.
• Having more than one child to avoid being an only-child family

As there is a growing percentage of 'single children' in India, this research paper tries to compare the personality correlates of 'single children' with the children having siblings. Do Indian children also show the same trend of 'single children' found all over the world or do they differ on any dimension of personality?

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

1. To measure Cool vs. Warm dimension of personality and examine whether single children and Sibling Children differ significantly from each other or not.
2. To assess concrete thinking vs. abstract thinking among the students and search the extent to which single children and Sibling Children differ from each other on concrete thinking vs. abstract thinking.
3. To assess emotional stability in students and to search whether there is significant difference between single

children and Sibling Children on the dimension of emotional stability.

4. To know the level of excitement in the students and examine the difference between single children and Sibling Children on the characteristic of excitement.

5. To examine the presence of Dominant vs. Submissive characteristic in students and to understand the difference between single children and Sibling Children on the dominance vs. submissive characteristic.

6. To measure the extent of cheerfulness in students and to know if single children and Sibling Children significantly differ on the dimension of cheerfulness.

7. To assess the personality characteristic of conformity in students and to know if single children and Sibling Children students differ significantly on the dimension of conformity.

8. To measure the presence of boldness in students and to examine whether single children and Sibling Children differ significantly on the dimension of boldness.

9. To assess sensitivity dimension of personality in students and to know who shows significant level of sensitivity in single children and Sibling Children.

10. To measure the extent of withdrawal characteristic in students and to know whether single children and Sibling Children differ on this characteristic.

11. To measure the level of apprehension dimension of personality in students and to understand the difference in single children and Sibling Children on this dimension.

12. To assess the self -sufficiency characteristic in students and to examine the significant difference between male and females on this dimension of personality.

13. To measure the level of self- discipline in students and if single children and Sibling Children differ significantly on this characteristic.

14. To assess the dimension of tension in students and to know if there is significant difference between single children and Sibling Children

HYPOTHESES

1. Sibling Childrenare more Warmhearted than Single Children.
2. Sibling children are significantly more intelligent than Single children.
3. Sibling children and single children show significant difference on the Emotionally Stable scale.
4. Sibling Children are significantly more Excitable than single children.
5. Single Childrenand sibling childrenshow no significant difference on the Dominant scale of personality.
6. Single Children are morecheerful than sibling children.
7. There exists no significant difference between Single Children and Sibling Children on the tendency to Conform.
8. Sibling children are bolder than single children.
9. Single children show moreSensitivity than sibling children.
10. Single children appear more Withdrawn than sibling children.
11. Single children and sibling children differ significantly on the personality dimension ofApprehension.
12. Single children are more Self Sufficient than sibling children.
13. Single children are more Self Disciplined than sibling children.
14. Single children and sibling children differ significantly on the tendency to be Tense.

METHDOLOGY

High School Personality Questionnaire(HSPQ) was used to measure the personality correlates of the adolescents. It is a personality questionnaire suitable for use with high school students. It was published in 1984.HSPQ is a personality questionnaire which evaluates 14 personality characteristics with in-depth self-report inventory. HSPQ assess following dimensions of the personality: Warmth, Intelligence, Emotional Stability, Excitability, Dominance, Cheerfulness, Conformity, Boldness, Sensitivity, Withdrawal, Apprehension, Self-Sufficiency, Self-Discipline, and Tension.The sample was randomly chosen from different schools and two cities in Maharashtra. A sample of 36'single children' and 36 children who have siblings were chosen for the

study. The age of the sample is between 14-18 years.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The test was conducted on the Ninth and Tenth standard students of different schools. T test was used to find the difference between the mean scores of the two groups (i.e. 'single children' and children with siblings) on the 14 factors.

The table shows difference between Single Children and Sibling Children on all the 14 factors. Mean, Standard Deviation was calculated. t test was used to find out whether there is significant difference between the means of the two groups.

DISCUSSION

The data shows that the Single Children and Sibling Children significantly differ on two scales of personality correlates i.e. B (Intelligence) scale and F (Enthusiastic) scale out of 14 scales. There is no significant difference on other 12 scales of personality which include: A(Reserved/Warmhearted), C (Affected by feelings/ Emotionally stable), D(Undemonstrative/ Excitable, E (Obedient/Assertive), G (Disregards Rules/Conscientious), H(Shy/Adventurous), I(Tough Minded/Tender Minded), J (Zestful/Circumspect Individualism), O (Self Assured/ Apprehensive), Q2 (Socially Group Dependent/ Self Sufficient), Q3 (Uncontrolled/ Controlled), Q4 (Relaxed/Tense).

The first hypothesis is rejected as the difference on the scale A (Reserved/Warmhearted) is not significant. The kind of environment that Single children get from their childhood is very different than the sibling children. Single children get full attention of the parents .Therefor the mean score of single children is more than sibling children hence single children appear more warmhearted than sibling children.

 The second hypothesis is accepted. Sibling children are significantly more intelligent than Single children higher scores on B scale(Concrete Thinking/Abstract Thinking) of Intelligence means that the person possesses following traits: general mental capacity, insightful, fast learning, intellectually adaptable, inclined to have more intellectual interests. Tend to be quick to grasp ideas and is a fast learner. (Scheurger, 1992 November-Decembe,r volume 71)There is a slight tendency of more intelligent child to show better morale, more persistence and greater school interest. (Cattell, 1999) Terman's work indicated that more intelligent adolescents tend to be popular with peers as work partners, well-adjusted to school, a leader, and less likely to be found in institutionalized delinquent groups. (Terman, 1959)

Lower scores on B scale include following traits: unable to handle abstract problems; tend to be less well organized. (Cattell R. B.,1999) Slow to learn and grasp and is given to concrete and literal interpretation. (Scheurger, 1992 November- Decembe,r volume 71)These findings do not mean that all the single children will be less intelligent. It only indicates a tendency of the Single Children to score less on intelligence scale.

TABLE No. 1:Difference between single child and sibling child

	Family Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
A(Reserved/Warmhearted)	Single children	36	12.417	2.750	1.038
	Sibling Children	36	11.722	2.924	
B (Less Intelligent/More Intelligent)	Single children	36	5.028	1.920	2.155*
	Sibling Children	36	5.972	1.797	
C (Affected by feelings/ Emotionally Stable)	Single children	36	10.333	2.330	0.220
	Sibling Children	36	10.194	2.984	
D(Undemonstrative/ Excitable)	Single children	36	10.250	2.729	0.652
	Sibling Children	36	10.750	3.706	
E (Obedient/Assertive)	Single children	36	8.889	2.775	0.991
	Sibling Children	36	8.194	3.161	
F (Sober/Enthusiastic)	Single children	36	9.333	2.898	2.129*
	Sibling Children	36	11.000	3.696	
G (Disregards Rules/ Conscientious)	Single children	36	11.306	3.013	0.142
	Sibling Children	36	11.194	3.471	
H (Shy/Adventurous)	Single children	36	9.778	3.833	1.206
	Sibling Children	36	10.806	3.388	
I (Tough Minded/Tender Minded)	Single children	36	12.056	3.414	0.963
	Sibling Children	36	11.167	4.359	
J (Zestful/Circumspect Individualism)	Single children	36	9.333	2.268	0.669
	Sibling Children	36	9.694	2.315	
O (Self Assured/ Apprehensive)	Single children	36	8.889	3.284	0.251
	Sibling Children	36	8.694	3.293	
Q2 (Socially Group Dependent/ Self Sufficient)	Single children	36	9.889	2.122	0.371
	Sibling Children	36	10.111	2.896	
Q3 (Uncontrolled/ Controlled)	Single children	36	10.444	2.802	0.282
	Sibling Children	36	10.639	3.044	
Q4 (Relaxed/Tense)	Single children	36	9.083	3.1926	0.942
	Sibling Children	36	9.861	3.788	

Intelligence is a trait which is inherited as well as acquired by the interaction with environment as defined by Wescheler: The aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment. (Wescheler). The B scale measures the g factor, also known as general intelligence, general mental ability or general intelligence factor. General mental ability (GMA) is a term used to describe the level at which an individual learns, understands instructions, and solves problems. Tests of general mental ability include scales that measure specific constructs such as verbal, mechanical, numerical, social, and spatial ability. (wikipedia, 2012) HSPQ has only used verbal scale to assess the intelligence of adolescents. Further research is required to assess the difference between Single and Sibling Children on other aspects of Intelligence.

Third hypothesis that the Sibling children and single children show significant difference on the C scale (Affected by feelings/ Emotionally Stable) is rejected. This indicates that being surrounded by siblings does not contribute to student's emotional stability.

Fourth hypothesis about the scaleD (Undemonstrative/ Excitable),that the Sibling Children are significantly more Excitable than Single Children is rejected. The score table shows that sibling children have scored little higher on this scale. This difference can be attributed to the stimulation level present in the environment.

Fifth hypothesis is accepted as Single Children and Sibling Children show no significant difference on the

Escale (Obedient/Assertive)of personality.Single children have scored slightly high on this scale. It's a speculation that single children get all the opportunity to assert themselves without any interruption therefor their assertiveness skill gets sharpened.

The sixth hypothesis is rejected as single children scored less than sibling children on the scale of cheerfulness. The score table indicates that the mean score of Sibling Children is more on F scale F (Sober/Enthusiastic). F scale includes the traits like talkative, cheerful, happy-go-lucky, frank, expressive, reflects to group, quick and alert. Adolescents scoring low scores on F scale are prone to be silent, introspective, concerned, reflective, stick to inner values. They also tend to be Sober and dependent persons. (Handbook for the Jr.-Sr. Highschool Personality Questionnare)

Verbal interaction in the Sibling families is more than Single child family. So the Sibling Children get exposure to an environment where there is always some kind of movement, stimulus to react to, and continuous interaction of the family members. The sibling adolescents get more stimulation in the environment as they are surrounded by many people that could be the reason that they are more excitable and enthusiastic than the single adolescents. Single children get lot of opportunity to stay in a calm environment therefore gets time to think, introspect, focus and reflect upon things.

There exists no significant difference between Single Children and Sibling Children on the Gscale (Disregards Rules/ Conscientious) therefor the seventh hypothesis is accepted.It can be said that both the sample share the trait equally when it comes to following rules.

The eighth hypothesis is rejected which says that Sibling children are more Bold than single children. The difference is not significant but the scores indicate that the mean score of sibling children is more than single children. Sibling children get more exposureas parents cannot be behind them forever. This gives them ample opportunities to explore their inner instincts.

Hypothesis no. nine is rejected as there is no significant difference on the I scale (Tough Minded/Tender Minded).But the mean score of Single children is more than sibling children.It is a speculation that since single children have no competition, don't have to share, all their wishes are fulfilled they become more tender minded.

Hypothesis no. ten is rejected as there is no significant difference between Single Children and sibling children on the J scale (Zestful/Circumspect Individualism). From the scores we can interpret that both the groups enjoy their environment with great energy and enthusiasm.

Hypothesis no. eleven is rejected as Single children and sibling children do not differ significantly on the O scale (Self Assured/ Apprehensive).

Hypothesis no.twelve is rejected as there is no significant difference between Single children and sibling children on the Q2 scale (Socially Group Dependent/ Self Sufficient). Sibling children are slightly more self-sufficientthan single children. Single children feel lonely most of the time so they always seek company and are always dependent on others as they are the once who need it desperately.

Hypothesis no thirteen is not accepted as Single children and sibling children don't show significant difference on Self Disciplined Q3 scale (Uncontrolled/ Controlled). The mean difference is marginal. Therefore we can say that both the groups resemble on this trait.

Hypothesis no. fourteenis rejected as Single children and sibling children do not differ significantly on the tendency to be Tense Q4 scale (Relaxed/Tense).Sibling Children have scored more on Q4 (Relaxed/Tense) in comparison to Single Children. The challenge, less opportunity to assert, unable to fulfill all the wishes, this kind of environment that sibling children get can be accounted for the difference in the Q4 (Relaxed/Tense) dimension of personality.

CONCLUSION

From the above findings we can conclude that there is significant difference on two personality correlates of the 'Single Children' and Sibling Children. These factors are scale F (Enthusiastic) and scale B(Intelligence).On rest of the scales there is no significant difference includingA-Warmth, C-Emotional Stability,D- Excitable,E-Assertive, G-Conformity, H-Boldness, I-Sensitivity, J-Withdrawal, O-Apprehension, Q2-

Self-Sufficiency, Q3-Self-Discipline, and Q4-Tension.

From this study we can conclude that Single Children and Sibling Children differ in some areas of personality but those areas cannot be labeled as good or bad but should be viewed in the perspective of the society and culture. These unique features of the society including the status given to males and females, treatment given to 'single children' by society, child's own perception of his family structure, parent's parenting style all these factors also contribute to the personality development of the children.

Now a day in most of the house holds both the parents are working. Kids go to schools from the age of 2.6 or 3 years and many of them stay in day care centers, especially in urban areas. All children get the same kind of exposure since their childhood so there is no significant difference in their personalities. The exposure of digital gadgets, the kind of schools that they attend, extra-curricular classes all these factors influence socialization, maturity level, understanding, knowledge and therefore all the children whether they have siblings or not do not differ on the personality characteristics . A recent study carried in Pune city also found no significant difference in the personality of single and sibling children. (J., 2017)

DELIMITATION:

As the sample size of the study is small we found significant difference on two scales of the test. There is a possibility that some more scales will show significant difference is the sample size is increased.

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