



The Relationship between Birth Order, Anxiety, and Locus of Control on Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

This current study aims to assess if there is a relationship between birth order, anxiety and locus of control. The sample included 60 (30 first-borns, 30 later-borns) English-speaking Indian students aged between 18 to 25 years whose anxiety levels and locus of control were assessed using Beck's Anxiety Inventory (BAI) and Rotter's Locus of Control Scale. The birth order of the participant was inquired while taking the demographic details. A quantitative approach was taken to assess the correlation between the three variables. Mann Whitney Wilcoxon Test or Mann-Whitney U test was employed to examine the relationship between birth order and anxiety and a Chi-squared test was employed to assess the relationship between birth order and locus of control within the sample. The results of the study displayed no significant relationship between the three variables. The study yielded no significant relationship between birth order and anxiety and no significant relationship between birth order and locus of control.

Keywords: Birth Order, Locus of Control, Anxiety, young adults

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INTRODUCTION

Birth Order: Birth order is the ordinal position of birth of a child in the family. Even though siblings grow up in the same family with the same family members, they can go through entirely different life experiences, and their birth order plays a substantial role in those experiences. It has been witnessed that the expectations from individual scan differ based on the or birth order.

"Born to Rebel", written by Frank Sullowayin, of cusses on the order of birth. He argues that he Darwinian competition among kids for their parents' attentions hopes personality [1].

Depending on their birth order, every child looks for a unique niche. Parents give their firstborns the greatest amount of undivided care, and they grow to maintain the status quo. The last-borns are the most disadvantaged members of the family and turn into the real revolutionaries; whereas middle children are more rebellious yet frequently act as peaceful mediators.

Anxiety: Anxiety is an uncontrollable, diffuse, unpleasant, and persistent state of negative affect, characterized by apprehensive anticipation regarding unpredictable and unavoidable future danger, and accompanied by physiological symptoms of tension and a constant state of height ended vigilance (2) Anxiety is an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes like increased blood pressure–American Psychological Association (APA).

Locus of Control: Rotter [3] defines a locus of control as the degree to which a person perceives an out come as being contingent on their own actions or those of external forces, existing along a continuum from a more internalized orientation to a more externalized orientation. People who feel they have personal agency over their own lives and activities are said to have an internal locus of control or internal sense of control. People with an internal locus of control thus usually display higher levels of self-efficacy. According to studies, people who possess an internal LOC typically fare better than those who don't. External locus of control describes the belief that circumstances beyond an individual's control are what determines how one acts and what results they get. If one succeeds in a game, they'll think that chance played a part [4]. Or they may reach the conclusion that the opposition lacked sufficient skill. Yet, if they lose, they'll think that their luck has run out.

"Birth Order and Internal-External Locus of Control"-H. S. Eswara [5] was done in an attempt to provide further evidence on the relationship between birth order and locus of control, an abbreviated measure of

internal-external locus of control was administered to a group of 89 male applicants for admission to the master's in business administration course at the University of Mysore, India. An abridged measure of internal-external locus of control was given to a group of 89 male applicants for admission to a master 'sin business administration course at the University of Mysore, India in an effort to provide more evidence on the relationship between birth order and locus of control. The study revealed that the earlier-born children had somewhat more internal LoC than later-born children. "Birth Order and Locus of Control"-Beck, B., Brown, K.E. [6]). It was predicted that individuals occupying the firstborn position in the family would be more likely to possess an internal locus of control, as compared to children occupying the position of later-born. The findings revealed no statistically significant distinction between firstborns and later borns in their mean internal score of locus of control. Both groups scored in the internal direction. "Birth Order and Anxiety: Is the Oldest Child the Most Anxious?"- Ramirez, C. [7] This study examines the link between birth order and its effects on anxiety levels. Fifteen firstborn and fifteen later-born males volunteered for the study. Each participant was interviewed briefly before testing to determine if there had been any regularities in sleep patterns, dietary habits or other activities that may affect autonomic functions. The results of the study support the idea that firstborns are more sensitive to stress than subsequent generations [8, 9].

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between locus of control, anxiety, and birth order amongst the Indian population aged between 18 to 25years through a quantitative study. The Objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between birth order, anxiety, and locus of control. To examine if birth order is correlated to anxiety experienced by an individual. To examine if birth order is correlated to the locus of control in an individual the variables of this study are Birth Order Independent variable and dependent variables were Anxiety, Locus of Control.

Hypotheses: *Ho-* There is no relationship between birth order, anxiety and locus of control. *H1:0 - A* relationship exists between birth order and anxiety.*H1:1 -* First-born individuals tend to have higher levels of anxiety. *H1:1-* Later-born individuals tend to have higher levels of anxiety. *H2:0-*A relationship exists between birth order and locus of control. *H2:1-*First-borns display an external LoC and later-borns display an internal LoC. *H2:2-*First-borns display an internal LoC and later-borns display an external LoC. The sample consisted of 60 Indian students (30 first-borns, 30 later-borns) who were aged between 18 to 25years. For this investigation, the snow ball sampling technique was used. This sample population was asked for their demographic details which included the birth order. Based on the birth order, 30first-borns and 30 later-borns were selected. These 60 participants were asked for informed consent and were then, administered the Beck's Anxiety Inventory and Rotter's Locus of Control Scale to assess their anxiety and locus of control. Statistical analysis was done using the software, IBM SPSS version 26, to perform the statistical analysis on the acquired data. The data were tested for normality using the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality and the data was deemed non-parametric. As a result, the Mann-Whitney U test was employed to examine the relationship between birth order and anxiety, and a Chi-squared test was employed to assess the relationship between birth order and locus of control within the sample.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study's main goal was to investigate the relationship between birth order, anxiety, and locus of control through a quantitative investigation.

Table1 Shows descriptive statistics for the entire sample(n=60)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Anxiety	60	24.00	79.00	40.8000	11.36125
Valid N (listwise)	60				

The descriptive statistics for the entire sample consisting of 60 participants on anxiety and birth order is shown in Table 1. A mean score of 40.80 was obtained in anxiety. This indicates that the sample as a whole has a low level of anxiety.

The SD values indicate the presence of individual differences in the current sample, suggesting that relatively higher individual differences exist in the variable of anxiety (SD=11.36).

Table 2: Showing results for normality of data distribution in birth order and anxiety using the Shapiro Wilk test

	Shapiro Wilk Statistic	df	Sig.
Anxiety	.954	60	.023

Table 2 shows the analysis of the the scores of the anxiety variable that were subjected to the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality. The Shapiro-Wilk statistic on the dimension of anxiety at the 0.05 level are significant, indicating that a significant deviation from normality exists. The score for this dimension is not normally distributed. Therefore, the correlations and significance of group differences were found using non-parametric statistics. Mann-Whitney Wilcoxon Test or Mann-Whitney U test was employed to examine the relationship between birth order and anxiety and chi-squared test was employed to assess the relationship between birth order and locus of control within the sample.

Table 3: Showing results of the Mann-Whitney U test between birth order and anxiety

	Birth Order	N	Mean	SD	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Sig. (2-tailed)
Anxiety	First-born	30			32.17	965.00	400.000	.740
	Last-born	30			28.83	865.00	865.000	.459
	Total	60						

The results of the Mann-Whitney U test that analyzed the relationship between birth order and anxiety on a sample population of 60 young adults, with 30 first-borns and 30 later-borns are shown in Table 3. From the table, it can be understood that the correlation coefficients between birth order and anxiety at the 0.05 level are not significant. This indicates that the two variables are not correlated, and they exist independently in the sample. Therefore, the first alternative hypothesis, "relationship exists between birth order and anxiety", is rejected. While some studies have suggested a relationship exists between birth order and anxiety, there are other studies that have not found any significant association between the two variables. For example, a study published in the Journal of Research in Personality reported that there was no evidence of a link between birth order and anxiety levels. (Sulloway, 1997).

Table 4. Shows the descriptive stats between the birth order and anxiety

		Internal LoC	External LoC	Total
Birth Order	First-born	17	13	30
	Later-born	16	14	30
Total		33	27	60

The descriptive statistics for the entire sample consisting of 60 participants on birth order and the locus of control is shown in Table 1. It can be observed that 17 first-borns and 16 later-borns have an internal locus of control. Along with this, 13 first-borns and 14 later-borns have an external locus of control.

Table 5 displays the findings of the correlation between the birth order and locus of control for a sample population of 60 people. From the table it is seen that the correlation coefficients between the birth order and locus of control are not significant at the .05/.01 level. This means that there is no correlation between the two variables, and they exist independently in the sample. Therefore, the second alternative hypothesis, "relationship exists between birth order and locus of control", is rejected.

Table 5: Showing the results of the Chi-squared test between the birth order and locus of control

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.067 ^a	1	.795		
Continuity Correction ^b	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.067	1	.795		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.500
Linear-by-Linear Association	.066	1	.797		

There is some disagreement in the literature regarding the correlation between birth order and locus of control. Some studies have shown a correlation between birth order and locus of control, as I mentioned in my previous response, while others have displayed no significant relationship. For example, a study by

Williams and Dihoff [10] did not display any significant correlation between the birth order and locus of control among a sample population of college students.

CONCLUSIONS

1. There is no significant correlation between birth order and anxiety. Thus, it can be implied that the hypothesis that “There is no relationship between birth order, anxiety and locus of control” is accepted.
2. There is no significant correlation between birth order and locus of control. Thus, it is implied that the hypothesis that “There is no relationship between birth order, anxiety and locus of control” is accepted.
3. All the other alternative hypothesis that “A relationship exists between birth order and anxiety” and “A relationship exists between birth order and locus of control” have been rejected.

Implications of the findings

1. This study determines that even though existing theories like “Birth Order Theory” by Alfred Adler claim that birth order has an impact in an individual’s life, it does not affect the anxiety levels of an individual.
2. Even if siblings have varied experiences in the same house hold, it may not correlate with factors like the locus of control of an individual.
3. Birth order shows no significant relationship with either anxiety level of an individual or their locus of control.

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