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## Intelligence and Sibling Relationship

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### Abstract

Associations between relationships in sibling pair and cognitive skills were studied. The sample included 160 full families with two children of adolescent age. Family relationships diagnostic techniques and intellectual test (WAIS and WISC) were used. Elder children were shown to be more predisposed to conflict dominant behavior towards their siblings than younger ones. Antagonism in sibling pair was related to low levels of parents' acceptance and emotional closeness between parents and children. The children with low IQ score are more likely to dominate in sibling pair. The firstborns who demonstrate higher IQ scores are more likely to cooperate with younger sibling.

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Relationship between siblings is one of the most important factors that determine children development.

Researchers believe that children who grow up in the same family often adopt asymmetric complementary roles when they play: elder siblings adopt roles of a teacher and a facilitator while younger siblings adopt roles of a pupil and a person who needs guidance and help [1].

Role allocation in role playing situations leads to higher marks in basic school disciplines in elder children who reported that they had taught their younger siblings compared with basic school disciplines marks in those elder children who had siblings but never thought them [2].

Moreover, it is certain that such education and play interaction significantly influence younger sibling development. In many studies it was shown that an elder sibling was a more effective teacher than an older friend.

It is natural that sibling relationship quality itself plays an important role in children cognitive development. Thus, in case of a sustained conflict between children their relationship would hardly facilitate

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children education even in role playing situations. When children relationship is warm and friendly this results in both the increase of the number of cooperative games between children and the situation when elder siblings who do well at school would provide an example for the younger ones and by helping and supporting encourage them to study better.

One of the most important factors that influence sibling relationship quality is parent-child relationship. Child behavior patterns resulting from parent-child relationship are transferred directly to interaction with siblings and peers.

If children watch positive interaction between the family members this allows them to learn hearing siblings, feeling for them in their problems, contributing in cooperative disputes decision [3]. In such cases children would likely decide disputes with their siblings without aggression.

Children whose relationships with parents are described in terms of violent educational measures and suppressed aggression would most probably develop such behavior styles that result in conflicts with siblings. In such situations siblings would rigidly press their claims provoking aggression even if the conflict is insignificant [4].

Thus, we can suggest that the influence of parent-child relationship on relationship between siblings is very substantial and results in either conflict or positive (based on acceptance) relationships.

Within Moscow sibling study the **goal** of evaluating effects of sibling relationships on cognitive development in elder and younger siblings was set.

### **1. The aims of the study:**

to compare characteristics of elder and younger siblings attitude to each other;

to analyze interrelations between sibling and parent-child relationships;

to analyze the influence of sibling relationship on intelligence development in elder and younger siblings.

**2. The sample** included 160 two-parent families with two children aged 8-22. Age difference between children was less than 5 years.

### **3. Methods**

Level of intellectual development was determined using Wechsler Intelligence Scale.

For siblings aged 8-16, the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children was used [5].

For siblings aged 17-22, the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale was used.

Parent-child relationships were evaluated using Parent-Child Interaction Questionnaire [6], [7].

Sibling relationships were evaluated using Sibling Inventory of Differential Experience (SIDE) [8].

### **4. Results**

#### *4.1. Student t-test comparison*

Significant differences between elder and younger children were found for the following scaled scores: dominance, antagonisma, attachment and cooperation, as well as orientation toward success and orientation toward education (see Table 1). We can say that elder children dominate in sibling relationship, tend to suppress younger children, more often initiate conflicts and quarrels however they are more oriented toward cooperative activity and cooperative problem solving than younger children. Younger children in turn are more attached to their siblings and more emotionally dependent on relationship within the sibling pair than the elder ones. Besides, elder children and their surroundings are more oriented toward success and popularity while younger children are more oriented toward education. The difference between scores for orientation toward education and orientation toward success may be due to age differences of the subjects. Younger children who are still under parents care and in many cases have to comply with the demands of parents and teachers believe that doing well at school is very important. As most of elder children took part in this study were college students they thought of their career

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