



Research Paper

Friendship in single child and child with sibling

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Abstract

The study examined the significance between two independent groups that is single child and child with siblings for the variable friendship. Friendship is described as a state of well connected social interactions and the absence of loneliness and isolation. Friendship is seen as an important characteristics of adolescent period because it is known to improve the psychological development, social competence and self esteem in adolescents.

Key words: Friendship, Single child, Child with sibling

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The importance of friendship has been observed from the time of Ancient Greek and Roman philosophers across the globe. Many of the friendship studies started from 1920's by Psychologists, Sociologists, and Educators. Friendship is very important relationship that exists during adolescence in a high level than at any period of life. It is also equally important for the well-being of adolescent development. The depth and vitality of friendships and the time spend with friends are greater during adolescence. Adolescents rely on friends more than parents for intimacy and support and they share confidences. The increased intimacy in friendships influences the cognitive and emotional development. They are better able to express their private thoughts and feelings, they can accept another person's point of view and can understand a friend's thoughts and feelings. Adolescents tend to be sociable, do well in school and are not likely to be hostile, depressed or anxious, if they are having intimate, supportive and long lasting friendships (Berndt & Perry, 1990; Buhrmester, 1990; Hartup & Stevens, 1999). Friendships provide a platform to put forward your opinions, and weakness and to get support and solutions to your problems (Buhrmester, 1996).

Although some relationship in friendship between single child and child with sibling has been established indirectly in some studies, there is a need to study friendship and the related social connection in friendship scale among single child and child with sibling especially in Indian context. Some of the studies has shown that child with siblings have more friendship quality and conflict resolving abilities than single child, however there is a derth of literature in studies of single child and child with siblings. There is a great need to study friendship among childhood and adolescence because friendship is very much necessary in the development period of adolescence because it helps in psychological adjustment and social competence.

Friendship is a least studied topic especially in Indian context but it has a great importance in social psychology, so by understanding the need for the study of friendship the researcher has chosen the topic among late adolescents. Also it is very much useful in measuring the social connection and interaction qualities in people.

While considering single child and child with siblings there is some significant differences like difference in self confidence, skills, IQ and better academic performance etc... is high for single child but child with siblings achieved some experiences which will be useful in future for adjusting and solving problems in relationships.

The above studies show that friendship is achieved by the influence of some factors like following a religion, having positive and happy relationship with mother and also adapting better strategies to maintain a friendship like problem solving and conflict resolution. Also good friendship quality leads to friendship satisfaction. Then from some literatures on friendship quality in adolescence, we can infer that there were many factors predicting friendship quality. Normally friendship quality is defined by closeness, companionship, helping, security, acceptance and low conflict. Some factors like social behaviours, family relations and student relations also predicted friendship quality. Then there is some differences between male and female populations.

The variable discussed in the study is friendship so basically friendship and the quality is predicted by some factors like closeness, help, acceptance, safety, intimacy and many more. Generally all these qualities are

expected by an individual from their close friends contributing to high friendship as seen in the studies. Also some other factors like following a religion, having positive and happy relationship with mother and also adapting better strategies to maintain a friendship like problem solving and conflict resolution gives high level of friendship. Also good friendship quality leads to friendship satisfaction. There were many factors predicting friendship quality. Normally friendship quality is defined by closeness, companionship, helping, security, acceptance and low conflict. Some factors like social behaviours, family relations and student relations also predicted friendship quality. Then there is some differences between male and female populations. The friendship qualities of children with siblings especially girls with better sibling adjustment tend to have more peer attachment and intimate friendships, as stated in the study of Olivia and Arranz (2005), which is only a partial evidence that children with siblings will have more friendship quality. So more studies need to be done on male adolescents as well. There is also some chances among single children to develop poor friendships because they grown up without siblings and so less interaction and adjustment experiences, but more findings on this topic of study is necessary to ensure that single children will have lower level of friendship quality. In the case of single child and child with siblings there is some significant differences like difference in self confidence, skills, IQ and better academic performance etc... is high for single child but child with siblings achieved some experiences which will be useful in future for adjusting and solving problems in relationships. The study of friendship has a great significance especially in adolescent period because high quality positive friendship is important for the social, emotional and psychological adjustment and development of the adolescents and the overall well being as suggested in many studies. All these studies shows that there is some difference in the level of friendship among single child and child with sibling. However, these studies are not enough to explain the friendship among single child and child with sibling, so the present study notices this gap and tries to find more evidences with further researches.

The hypothesis of the study is that there is no significant difference in friendship among single child and child with sibling. According to the results of the study the null hypothesis was accepted and it was found that there is no significant difference in friendship among single child and child with sibling. But this finding doesn't support the discoveries of other researches conducted in the sphere of friendship, single child and child with sibling maybe because of the limitation in the geographical area.

So the result of the study shows that there is no significant difference in friendship among single child and child with siblings which contradicts the studies of previous researches. This may due to the socio-economic background, cultural differences and many others which may affect the results of the study. Also the study is done on a limited population from a single geographical area comprising of one state and also only on late adolescents, then the number of male participants in the study is also very less compared to the female participants, so it can have some contradicting results on the previous studies

With reference to the given review of literature, we can infer that the sample of adolescents for this study does not match with the global results of friendship studies and studies done on single child and child with siblings. It is also noted that there is a dearth of literature in comparative studies of single child and child with siblings. However, in many of the previous studies it is seen that if the relationship with the family members like parents or siblings is good and also the presence of siblings during the developmental years of adolescence lead to good friendship quality and satisfaction with the friendship.

Various studies have shown that friendship in children and adolescents are affected by many factors like family relationships and their relationship with parents, siblings and parental behaviours towards other people and also many qualities like acceptance, truthfulness etc. This study focussed on the difference in friendship among single child and child with siblings. Many studies have shown the gap in terms of the direct connection between friendship and the predictors of high quality friendship. And also there is a derth of literature in studies of single child and child with siblings which serves as a major research gap for further researches. Therefore descriptive statistical analysis and t-test of equal variances were used in the study to know the difference in friendship among single child and child with siblings. From the study we see that there is no significant difference in friendship among single child and child with sibling and also both the categories were equally distributed among all the divisions of the friendship scale. And also female participants outscored males in friendship.

So the researcher hopes to contribute in identifying the difference and similarities for friendship in single child and child with siblings through some of the findings and fostering the way for further research in friendship in the field of social psychology.

Friendship was studied as the dependent variable and the two categories of child with sibling and single child were studied under this variable. As stated above, the hypothesis tested the significant difference between single child and child with sibling with friendship as the variable.

With the help of the findings of the study, we can identify the social connection and interaction among the two groups. So the study of friendship and the related variables in single child and child with sibling results in new ventures and novel ideas in the field of social psychology. Also this study helps to lay groundwork for further research in the Indian context.

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