

Impact of Being a Middle Child on Romantic Relationships and Intimacy

Avika Gupta¹, Sarthak Paliwal²

¹ Student, Shiv Nadar School, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

² Research Fellow, O.P. Jindal Global University, Haryana, India

ABSTRACT

The present study attempts to offer a brief explorative account of experiences of middle children in urban Indian families, specifically focusing on their understanding of romantic relationships and intimacy. Keeping the usual assumption of 'middle children experiencing neglect at home', the paper attempted to look at other themes and factors that are unique to the experience of middle children in ways they engage with ideas of romance and intimacy. Through a thematic analysis of interviews done with five individuals, it was seen that one's relationship with parents and siblings determined how individuals saw their own worth or made sense of intimacy. Furthermore, the desire to be prioritized and feeling understood were crucial elements in middle children's expectations in their romantic relationships. However, due to a small sample size, the study does not make any generalized assumptions but offers opportunities to explore more ideas in relation to middle children's experiences.

Keyword: - Middle children, birth order, romantic relationships, intimacy, peer relations

1. INTRODUCTION

Birth order has long been a topic of psychological curiosity, particularly for the ways in which it shapes personality, emotional development, and interpersonal behaviour. Among these positions, *the middle child* occupies a unique and often overlooked space. The figure of the middle child is popularly associated with perceptions of being neglected, receiving less attention in the family, or living “in between” more celebrated siblings. Although these ideas may appear simplistic at first glance, they stem from deeper psychological theories and social dynamics. To understand the middle child's experience, it becomes essential to examine the psychosocial origins of these beliefs and the extent to which they influence adult life—especially romantic relationships and intimacy, which is also the foundational aspiration of the present paper.

Alfred Adler's Birth Order Theory (1964) provides the foundational psychological framework to interpret these dynamics. Adler (1964) argued that a child's position within the family hierarchy significantly influences their personality traits and behavioural patterns.

Firstborns often carry the advantages and pressures of receiving undivided parental attention early in life, leading to competence, responsibility, and at times, perfectionism. The youngest, usually the most indulged, are thought to grow into free-spirited or socially skilled individuals due to lenient parenting and secure attachment. Middle children, however, are situated between these two positions. They do not enjoy the novelty of being a firstborn nor the affection and lenience commonly offered to the youngest. As a result, they are widely believed to receive comparatively less focused parental involvement.

The middle children may feel underappreciated, overshadowed by older siblings' accomplishments, or displaced when a younger sibling arrives. The “middle child syndrome”—though debated—captures emotions of neglect, jealousy, or resentment arising from this familial positioning. Many middle children report working harder for recognition or struggling to carve out a distinct identity within the family. Middle children often develop independence, adaptability, and strong peer-oriented social skills (Mejares et al., 2024). They learn to negotiate, compromise, and understand multiple perspectives, and that receiving less parental attention can be beneficial, offering greater freedom to explore personal interests, develop individuality, and cultivate diverse interpersonal abilities.

Sibling relationships play a crucial mediating role in this developmental process (McHale et al., 2014). Positive sibling bonds contribute to emotional resilience, a healthier self-image, and a reduced risk of anxiety or aggression (Howe et al., 2023). Family Systems Theory, particularly Bowen's concept of *differentiation of self* (1978), offers a useful lens here: every child's ability to form relationships outside the family while remaining emotionally connected is shaped by their early family dynamics. Birth order, therefore, becomes an important factor in understanding later romantic preferences, attachment styles, and patterns of intimacy.

Existing research (Salmon, 2003; Murphy, 2012) explores whether birth order correlates with romantic relationship behaviour, partner compatibility, and communication styles. Since family roles shape leadership, conflict resolution, independence, and emotional expression, they inevitably influence adult romantic functioning. Middle children, known for their sociability, fairness, and balanced temperament, may develop strong interpersonal skills that translate into relationships (Salmon, 2003). At the same time, unresolved childhood feelings of neglect, undervaluation, or comparison may affect emotional intimacy, reassurance seeking, or attachment security in adulthood.

However, the *specific* romantic experiences of middle children and how their emotional histories, self-perceptions, and relational tendencies interact in their intimate relationships remain unexplored. The present study aims to bridge this gap by examining the psychological impact of being a middle child on romantic relationships and intimacy. By focusing on lived experiences, personal narratives, and perceived patterns, this research seeks to understand how birth order shapes the way middle children love, connect, and seek closeness. It hopes to offer a nuanced, psycho-social understanding of how the "middle position" within the family continues to echo in relational life, long after childhood has passed.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There have been a number of studies analyzing how birth order impacts people's social competence and romantic relationships.

M. Schilling (2001) studied whether birth order impacts people's type of relationships. Three types of relationships were studied: same-sex friendships, opposite-sex friendships, and opposite-sex romantic relationships. The study showed that while there was no significance between the type of relationship and birth order, it showed that unsuccessful relationships were seen with middle children. However, the reason for the same was not looked into.

E. McGuirk and T. Pettijohn (2008) examined how birth order relates to romantic relationship styles and attitudes among college students. Using survey responses from 100 male and female participants, the study assessed five components: jealousy, love attitudes, love styles, attachment, and personal romantic experiences. The findings showed that middle-born participants reported significantly higher levels of jealousy compared to firstborns. This is in contradiction to Salmon's study (2003), which states that middle children are the least expected to engage in sexual infidelity.

Tanskanen and Danielsbacka (2020) studied whether birth order affects relationship quality between adults and their parents. The research focused on the *neglected middle-born* hypothesis, which suggests that middle-born children have poorer relationships with parents compared to first-borns and last-borns. The relationship quality was measured through contact frequency, emotional closeness, intimacy, and conflict with both mothers and fathers. The study showed that while in all other aspects middle-borns did not differ significantly from first-borns or last-borns, they reported slightly less intimacy with their mothers than last-borns.

Stocker and colleagues (2002) examined the relationship between sibling conflict during middle childhood and psychological adjustment in early adolescence. Data on family relationships and children's adjustment, along with observational measures of parental hostility was collected. The findings revealed that higher levels of sibling conflict predicted increased anxiety, depressed mood, and delinquent behaviour two years later. Importantly, sibling conflict accounted for unique variance in adolescents' psychological adjustment beyond the effects of maternal hostility and marital conflict. Children's earlier adjustment did not predict later sibling conflict, highlighting the significant and independent role of sibling relationships in shaping emotional and behavioural outcomes during adolescence.

T. V. Pollet and D. Nettle (2009) studied whether birth order influences family and friendship relationships in adulthood. The study examined how adults viewed their relationships with parents, siblings, and close friends. It found that middle-borns did not have worse relationships than first- or later-borns, nor did they prefer friends over family. Only slight evidence of middle-child neglect appeared in within-family comparisons of sibling relationships. Firstborns, however, were more likely to report very strong sibling bonds and to prefer siblings over friends. Overall, birth order showed little impact on adult relationships, with some advantages for firstborns in sibling closeness. S. E. Doughty and colleagues (2014) further examined how sibling relationship experiences influence the development of romantic competence from early adolescence to young adulthood. The researchers analysed how sibling gender composition, intimacy, and conflict related to perceived romantic competence over time. The findings showed that adolescents with opposite-sex siblings experienced increases in romantic competence, whereas those with same-sex siblings showed no significant change. Additionally, higher levels of sibling intimacy were associated with greater romantic competence, while sustained sibling conflict predicted lower romantic competence.

It was also studied how birth-order impacts people's socially competent behaviour. P. R. Cundiff (2014) studied whether birth order influences juvenile delinquency during adolescence. Drawing on Adlerian birth order theory and Sulloway's *born-to-rebel* hypothesis (1996), the study analysed the relationship between birth order and various delinquent behaviours. The research aimed to examine both the between-individual and within-family differences to better address the potential spurious relationship. The findings revealed that birth order does not have a genuine effect on delinquency.

A. A. D. Silvestre and colleagues (2023) studied the lived experiences of middle children enrolled in senior high school at the Lyceum of Subic Bay. The perception of middle-born students on their roles and treatment within their families and social environments was studied. The findings revealed positive experiences such as self-dependence, studiousness, introversion, and taking on a mentor role, alongside negative experiences, including perceived unfair familial treatment and feelings of neglect.

Ashton and Lee (2024) and M. Martino (2025) studied whether adult personality traits are associated with birth order and the number of siblings. Ashton's (2024) study analysed traits while controlling for age and sex. The findings showed that firstborns scored slightly higher on intellect-related traits; however, notable differences in other personality dimensions, like Honesty, Humility, and Agreeableness, were higher among individuals with more siblings, with middle-borns scoring the highest, followed by last-borns, firstborns, and only children. Overall, the study suggests that growing up with more siblings may encourage the development of more cooperative and prosocial personality traits. Martino (2025) studied how middle child syndrome influences the emotional and psychological development of children and how these effects may continue into adulthood. The study highlighted that middle children can sometimes feel overlooked within the family, which may impact their self-esteem, sense of identity, and emotional well-being. However, the findings emphasized that awareness of these challenges enables parents to create a more supportive and balanced home environment, and parents can help them develop confidence and emotional resilience.

The main gaps that the present study wished to work upon were of lack of studies in Indian settings and specifically looking into the lived experiences of middle children and how they assume their birth order impacts their understanding of romantic relationships. The study is meant to explore the psycho-social factors related to understanding the world of middle children in an Indian family.

3. METHOD

The study involved qualitative interviews of a semi-structured set of questions with five adult women (average age to be 23 years) living in urban spaces in North Delhi. The women hailed from educated, middle-upper-class families. The choice of just interviewing only women was not a conscious one, rather a chance factor that only women middle-children came in response to the call for interview, indicating a social factor about Indian families that will be discussed later on in the Discussion section.

The interviews were conducted over call and transcripts were generated from the call recordings. The interview questions revolved around ideas of intimacy, experiences with relationships and family ties, all taking in consideration how an individual's position of being a middle child in the family affected them. The idea was to understand the lived experiences of individuals, as how they make sense of things, without letting the researcher's bias enter the picture.

Furthermore, a thematic analysis was done to analyse the transcripts and generate a structured understanding of people's lived experiences as middle-children in Indian settings. Thematic analysis was a useful choice for the present study to extrapolate specific themes and factors that play a crucial role in influencing people's understanding of birth order, intimacy, love, relationships and family dynamics. Some significant factors were able to come out after finding common patterns between the lived experiences shared by the five participants.

4. RESULTS

Table 1: Main themes and sub-themes

MAIN THEME	SUB-THEME	EXPLANATION
Imagination of a healthy relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritisation over everyone else • Impulsive and adventurous love • Mutual understanding • Fun and fulfilling • Comfort and trust • Not feeling judged • Vulnerability • Open communication 	The theme explored how middle children imagine their romantic relationship to be like, where they are prioritized more visibly and clearly, they feel a sense of trust and comfort with their partner.
Comparative attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not receiving enough attention • Treating like a mediator • No clear expression of love • High expectations • Not desiring another girl child 	Middle children often felt they did not get enough attention or were not wanted in the family. A specific dynamic of a middle-child being a girl also brought up issues of desiring a male off-spring.
Perceived personality characteristics based on birth order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impulsive and hyperactive • Having abandonment issues • Difficulty in expressing care and affection • Individualistic focus • Difficulty in asking for help and being vulnerable • Fearful of judgment and people's assumptions about self 	In this theme, the middle-children reported their personality traits on the basis of impulsivity, attention-desiring behavior and also, a difficulty in relating to other people. They struggled to establish healthy relationships and remained worried about people's judgment.
Red flags of self and the other in romantic relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistency in efforts • Too much dependency or isolation in relationship • Remained closed off or struggling with intimacy • Not prioritizing the other enough • Lack of understanding and trust 	Individuals highlighted the main challenges or 'red flags' they felt are in romantic relationships. Most of the red-flags mentioned were similar to problems individuals across all birth orders experience, hence, not highlighting any novel experience.

Relationship with siblings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elder sibling more communicative and reciprocal to everyone's feelings • Helps bring connect between the middle-child and parents • Younger sibling being pampered • Younger sibling invoking jealousy in middle child • The elder sibling is more emotionally invested in the relationship 	Sibling relationships by the middle-children interviewed were distinct and very few common themes could be drawn. Most of them had unique experiences, referring to individual differences in perception of bonds with other siblings.
Major challenges in life and intimacy as a middle-child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust and vulnerability • Managing expectations and need to impress others • Desire to be understood without communication/ lack of proper communication • Giving space to the other people in one's independent lifestyle • Not feeling needed 	Middle-children may experience difficulty in handling expectations and pleasing tendencies. They also face difficulty in relying upon the other in a relationship and being transparent with their desires and feelings.

5. DISCUSSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The present paper attempted to look at the lived experiences of middle-children in urban and semi-urban Indian spaces. With a small sample of individuals (five young-adult women aged 19-27 years) living in metropolitan cities of North India, the study does not promise to offer large conclusive assumptions about middle-children experience in an Indian setting, but offer beginning grounds to understand what the lived reality might be constituted of. By not desiring to segregate and cluster people's shared experiences, the study becomes unique in its attempt to bring forth the understanding of individuals' experience of being a middle child and how they themselves make sense of their birth order in relation to their relationships and other life dynamics.

The theme *Imagination of a Healthy Relationship* highlights how middle children envision romantic relationships as spaces of emotional safety, visibility, and balance. Participants consistently described a desire to be clearly prioritised by their partner, often linking this to feelings of reassurance and emotional security that may have been lacking earlier in life. Alongside this, relationships were imagined as impulsive, adventurous, and fun, suggesting a longing for freedom and shared excitement rather than rigidity. Referencing Adler's birth order theory (1962), the rigidity might also stem from being placed between the responsible older sibling and the impulsive younger sibling, and not leaving much space for the individual to explore themselves.

A study on Birth Order and Romantic Relationship Styles and Attitudes in College Students (McGuirk & Pettijohn, 2008) concluded that middle children reported the highest jealousy in relationships, possibly stemming from family competition for attention, and showed trends toward insecure attachment, echoing needs for reassurance and emotional safety. They scored higher on game-playing (Luduss) love styles, suggesting a pull toward fun and freedom over rigidity. Complementary to it, in the present research, mutual understanding emerged as a central theme, with participants emphasising comfort, trust, and the ability to be vulnerable without fear of judgement. Open communication was viewed as essential in maintaining this sense of safety, allowing individuals to express their needs and emotions freely. Overall, a healthy relationship was imagined not as demanding or restrictive, but as fulfilling and supportive, one where both partners feel seen, heard, and emotionally accepted.

The theme of *Comparative Attention* brought forward how middle children often experienced an ongoing *sense of imbalance* in the care and affection they received within their families. A few participants spoke about feeling overlooked, describing how attention was frequently directed more toward their siblings. This feeling was deepened by their role as *mediators*, where they were expected to manage conflicts, remain emotionally flexible, and keep peace within the family, often without receiving the same understanding or support. The absence of clear expressions of love further contributed to feelings of emotional uncertainty and insecurity. High expectations around maturity and responsibility added to this pressure. For middle children who were girls, these experiences were intensified by an unspoken preference for a male child, leading to feelings of being unwanted or less valued within the family. Together, these experiences shaped a lasting sense of emotional neglect and conditional belonging. A client shared with quite a vulnerability, *'I think my biggest challenge (in a romantic relationship) is actually believing that the other person is being, you know, real about it (the feelings towards the partner), because I feel like there's no way (that can be true)'*. She found it hard to believe that someone could genuinely want and desire her.

Similar to the above-mentioned themes, middle-children also reported 'impulsivity', 'hyperactivity' and 'a difficulty in expressing affection' as part of their personality. A participant mentioned, *'I think my biggest red flag is that I tend to get hyper very easily, but then I also calm down very quickly but then sometimes I don't end up differentiating between the two feelings'*.

They believe it stemmed from their experience of neglect or desire to be heard and seen in the family dynamics. While one participant did stand on the opposite end of it, most participants supported the claim of doing acts that can bring attention towards them. However, there is a paradoxical pull at the same time, as claimed by the participants, to also remain aloof and focus on their own selves, trying to remain away from the 'herd-like mentality' of the family (as one participant puts it). This might stem from a desire to be seen as unique and different, which in their family dynamic, they were not. This desire to be unique also puts the barrier of not being vulnerable and requesting help from people. A fixation on independence and industriousness may affect their ability to form intimate and vulnerable bonds in romantic spaces. Going back to Erikson's psychosocial stages (1950), the experience of *industriousness and inferiority* stem close to each other. For middle-children, in most cases when they get in the position of being a middle child in the family, they tackle this stage of personality development. Children are told they are 'older' now since there is a young child in the family and they still feel 'young enough' in presence of their elder sibling, often, leaving the child in a confused space between the two. *'They always catered to me like a soldier, leaving me to fend for myself'*, a client complained when asked about how she felt about her experience while growing up. Now, as an adult, when she makes her own decisions, it feels exhausting to her because she feels she has been doing that for a long time. Later, she also said, *'So I think my parents always had this expectation for me to behave in a certain way. And also I ended up growing pretty quickly, growing up as an I did not really relive my childhood'*.

Middle-children try to cope with the challenges of being on their own and still facing inferiority in front of other older family members. Henceforth, even after growing up, individuals struggle to ever ask for affection or demand love in a relationship.

As stated enough in the above themes, middle-children in many Indian families might experience some or the other form of neglect, responsibility thrust upon them and un-met desires by loved ones. Naturally, this led to individuals also seeing 'inconsistency in efforts' and 'lack of prioritization' as red-flags in romantic relationships. They feel when the partner is unable to pay them enough attention or attend to their needs, it affects their overall self-esteem and mental well-being. This might be closely linked to an object-relational idea of developing 'objects' outside in the world with which we draw links and connections. Often, intimate objects from childhood (parents and siblings) are seen in adult relationships as well. Hence, a neglect in childhood might be seen more disastrously when it gets replicated in adult relationships as well. Dunford (2025) explored how adverse childhood experiences can lead to development of insecure or detached attachment patterns in young-adults. While there is no direct study that may depict how middle-children in families experience neglect, it might be worthwhile positing that middle-children may develop difficult attachment styles because of their experiences as well. Some participants, in the present study, were also mindful enough to highlight that their own sense of independence or desire to depend too much on the partner, or their inability to trust the other completely, can be their own 'red-flags' in relationships.

While studying sibling relationships in families with three children, it was seen, through the participants' interviews, that the elder sibling was perceived as communicative and reciprocative in the family, often acting as a way through which the middle-child would communicate their feelings to the parents, as a participant said, *'like a bridge between the parents and the middle child'*. For two participants, the younger siblings evoked a sense of jealousy in them and were often seen as pampered and naive to the point of no proper relationship being developed between them. Interestingly, among two narratives explored in the study, there was a theme of parenting in an

inter-sibling dynamic. Often, the eldest sibling treated the middle-child like their own child and the middle-child treating the youngest child in the family as their own kid. It becomes interesting to note how in the case of middle-child, they navigate the experience of both being nurtured and being the one who nurtures at the same time. For a participant, the tensed relation and anger with her elder sister was also closely resembling her anger and distrust with her parents too, highlighting how parental roles get merged into sibling relationships as well.

Lastly, a crucial theme emerged about major challenges that individuals believed they faced because of their birth order. The struggle in intimacy, for them, stemmed from their desire to be understood and prioritized in a relationship, without having to put in the effort constantly because the effort seems to have been put by them in almost every other relationship. A participant shared, *'In childhood, every fault was seen as mine. So I had to explain myself each time. Now, when I feel like being emotional with someone, I have to take in consideration that I should not feel hurt'*.

Middle-children struggle to give and offer space to the other individual in intimacy because of the fear of losing their own identity and later on, feeling neglected even if some minor inconvenience happens. Overall, their tussle to please people and also find respect and affection lets them, once again, be in a middle ground of knowing and not-knowing their own desires and feelings.

The paper overall offers a portrayal of how middle-children make sense of their lives, romantic relationships and intimacy in urban Indian families. An interesting theme, which did not get highlighted in the psychological exploration above, was of societal desire to have a male child. Often, in many cases, the first two children were girls and the youngest one being a boy, which showed the implicit desire to have a male child. In some families, the disappointment of the second child not being a boy and hence a more desired third boy child was stated explicitly, which added to the middle-child's feeling of neglect. Hence, in Indian context, the experience of being a middle-child is also gendered and influenced by a feeling of inherent disappointment and rejection because the parental desire was placed on having a son. To a large degree, it can be assumed that the experiences of growing up as a girl and a middle-child find solidarity in each other and offer the unique personality and perspectives that have been studied in the present paper.

Lastly, to say, no paper is flawless. Each paper holds its restrictions. This paper comes in a place of little to no study being conducted in the area in the Indian context. By positioning itself in Indian context and studying the perception and experience of romantic relationships and intimacy by middle-children of the family, the study offers a unique ground for future studies to investigate further into this area. Though the study lacked a large sample size, it makes up for it with its dense thematic investigation of the interviews, offering valuable insights that can be used by researchers in future.

6. CONCLUSION

The study was initiated by the aspiration to explore the perspectives and viewpoints of middle-children around romantic relationships and intimacy. The study tapped into the young-adult urban population in Indian cities who were either involved in higher education or were working. The individuals' perspectives, analyzed through a phenomenological and thematic lens, offered insights into the experiences of individuals while growing up and how their understanding of love, desire and care were shaped by early experiences. The study now offers direction to future research to investigate how middle-children can work around their contradicting desires of holding on to their individual identity and find comfort and solace in the presence of an intimate partner as well.

7. REFERENCES

- [1]. Ashton, M.C. & Lee, K. (2024). Personality differences between birth order categories and across sibship sizes. *Psychological and Cognitive Sciences*, 122 (1) e241670912
- [2]. Bowen, M. (1978). *Family therapy in clinical practice*. Jason Aronson.
- [3]. Cundiff P. R. (2013). Ordered delinquency: the "effects" of birth order on delinquency. *Personality & social psychology bulletin*, 39(8), 1017–1029. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167213488215>

- [4]. Doughty, S. E., Lam, C. B., Stanik, C. E., & McHale, S. M. (2015). Links Between Sibling Experiences and Romantic Competence from Adolescence Through Young Adulthood. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 44(11), 2054–2066. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-014-0177-9>
- [5]. Dunford, A.B. (2025). The Psychological Effects of Childhood Trauma on Adult Relationships. *Student Works*. 400. <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/studentpub/400>
- [6]. Erikson, E. H. (1950). *Childhood and Society*. UK: W. W. Norton & Company
- [7]. Howe N, Recchia H, Kinsley C. (2023). Sibling Relations and Their Impact on Children’s Development. In: Tremblay RE, Boivin M, Peters RDeV, eds. Boivin M, topic ed. *Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development* [online]. <https://www.child-encyclopedia.com/peer-relations/according-experts/sibling-relations-and-their-impact-childrens-development>.
- [8]. Martino, M. (April, 2025). How Middle Child Syndrome Affects Kids & Ways to Foster Balance. <https://www.handspringhealth.com/post/understanding-middle-child-syndrome>
- [9]. McGuirk, E., & Pettijohn, T.F. (2008). Birth Order and Romantic Relationship Styles and Attitudes in College Students. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 10, 37.
- [10]. McHale, S.M., Dariotis, J.K. & Kauh, T.J. (2003). *Social Development and Social Relationships in Middle Childhood*. In *Handbook of Psychology*, I.B. Weiner (Ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1002/0471264385.wei0610>
- [11]. Mejares, A., et al. (2024). Cast no shadow: a phenomenological study of a middle child. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 1(1), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.62910/hmmbe413>
- [12]. Murphy, L.J. (2012). The Impact of Birth Order on Romantic Relationships. *Semantic Scholars*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Impact-of-Birth-Order-on-Romantic-Relationships-Murphy/b1427a6dee0e1df32a971fc00a4f601f04bc71d4>
- [13]. Pollet, T. V., & Nettle, D. (2009). Birth order and adult family relationships: Firstborns have better sibling relationships than laterborns. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 26(8), 1029–1046. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407509347940>
- [14]. Salmon, C. (2003). Birth Order and Relationships. *Human Nature*, 14(1), 73-88. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Catherine-Salmon/publication/227336673_Birth_order_and_relationships/links/0c96051deec2dd806100000/Birth-order-and-relationships.pdf
- [15]. Schilling, M. (2001). The Effects of Birth Order on Interpersonal Relationships. *McKendreeUniversity*, 1. <https://www.mckendree.edu/academics/scholars/issue1/schilling.htm>
- [16]. Silvestre, A.A.D. (2023). Middle Adulthood Perceived Well- Lived Life: A Case Study Approach. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 9, 894-898.
- [17]. Stocker, C. M., Burwell, R. A., & Briggs, M. L. (2002). Sibling conflict in middle childhood predicts children's adjustment in early adolescence. *Journal of family psychology : JFP : journal of the Division of Family Psychology of the American Psychological Association (Division 43)*, 16(1), 50–57. <https://doi.org/10.1037//0893-3200.16.1.50>
- [18]. Sulloway, F.J. (1996). *Born to Rebel. Birth order, family dynamics, and creative lives*. USA: Pantheon Books.
- [19]. Tanskanen, A. O., & Danielsbacka, M. (2020). Parenthood status and relationship quality between siblings. *Journal of Family Studies*, 26(2), 260–271. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2017.1374203>
- [20]. Toal, R. A. (1966). Review of *Alfred Adler--Superiority and social interest: A collection of later writings* [Review of the book *Alfred adler--Superiority and social interest: A collection of later writings*, by L. Heinz & R. R. Ansbacher, Eds.]. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice*, 3(1), 43–44. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0087963>