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A Comparative Study On The Psychological Well-Being And Self-Esteem Among Adults With And Without Siblings.

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ABSTRACT

The relationship amongst siblings is an important element in the personal development of individuals across the lifespan. From childhood through adulthood, the interactions and overall relationship built can influence various aspects such as the psychological well-being and self-esteem. The aim of the this study was to compare the psychological well-being and self-esteem among adults with and without siblings. The study assesses the interconnection of the psychological well-being and self-esteem of adults with siblings and those without siblings. For the data collection, a total sample of 200 adults, 100 adults with siblings and 100 adults without siblings (only child) ranging from 18 years to 30 years were collected. Psychological Wellbeing (PWB) Scale (18-item version) developed by psychologist Carol D. Ryff, and The Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES), developed by Morris Rosenberg were used for the data collection. The results indicate that there are significant differences in both PWB and SE between adults with and without siblings, with individuals with siblings reporting higher levels of both constructs.

Keywords: Psychological well being, self-esteem, siblings, only child, adults, sibling status, family dynamics.

INTRODUCTION

During childhood, a person often spends most of their time in the same household as his butcher-siblings. The relationship lasts throughout adult life and until death. As in case with adults, they spend a lot of time with their siblings against any other social relation, and the relationship can vary from year to year with the childhood fights to be a primary bond which is usually a long-lasting relationship with the childhood and giving a quickening to relationships that last till the very old ages. It is not only at home but also in the society that it plays a very significant role. Besides having an impact on family's life, it also helps define a person's life success and adjustment to his/her social situation. Generally speaking, people do regard their sibling as their best friend and love them wholeheartedly because the former is of the same age group and cohabit in the environment. Most of the time siblings are proven to handle social networks well while going through the transition period from young adulthood to adulthood. They take care of this process jointly concerning social relationships, school, family drama and so on. The young people who take their sibling relationships positively usually enjoy the feeling of self-worth which in their turn significantly reduces their depression levels (to the extent that may approach none), make them less prone to delinquent behaviors, and have fewer reasons to use substances.

The connection with the brother or sister all through the hard time of growing up is a great strength for the personality of the person. Studies investigating the sibling bond have discovered a correlation between strong sibling relationships and improved adaptation (Pike et al., 2005). Conversely, when sibling relationships are strained, they can have adverse effects on the development, growth, and behavior of young individuals (Snyder, Bank, & Burraston, 2005). Some posit that intimate relationships which are close, emotionally deep are connected to social wellbeing positively whereas, relationships marked by conflict, family tension and lack of closeness habitually impact health negatively which is reflected in drinking disorders and major depression in later adulthood. Similarly, a close and affectionate relationship between siblings has been linked to increased self-esteem among young people.

Furthermore, according to the research of Pastey and Aminbhavi (2006), teens with plenty of siblings tend to possess more self-confidence compared to those with fewer siblings. The reviewers found that although the position of birth order does not have a notable impact on the self-confidence of teens, it can influence their social and emotional adjustment and behavior. At the same time, the interaction among parent and siblings, and psychological control processes toward adolescent was part of the study. Their conclusion included that psychological control caused by equally both the parents and siblings worsens the psychological status of those in their teens and reduces their self-confidence.

An only child is simply an individual who was reared without any siblings with near to being raised by their parents or peers resulting to channels of relationship that may persist for the lifetime. Siblings often leave parenting tasks undividided and let them enjoy full attention and resources from parents. A particular living environment/situation like this can mold the child's mind, physical growth and behavior. There are lots of unique experiences that will certainty affect every child who is an only child, the development of personality, and the very perception of the world. It's been found that individuals without siblings may be somehow socially and relationally different from those who have sibling. Nevertheless, unique cases of being an only child may not be same and thus it is beyond denial that being an only child affects mental health in

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various ways.

The findings have shown the link between the association of the siblings' relationships with cognitive advancement, academic achievement, sociability, and emotional well-being in childhood and adolescence. On the flip side, no researcher has accurately assessed the rising adults outcomes with regards to sibling relationships and the quality of their relationships. Also, identifying the linking mechanisms via which the pattern of linkage between sibling relationship quality and psychological well-being is given much attention.

Ryff (1989) delineated psychological well-being as "the pinnacle of psychological functioning and experience, encompassing six dimensions: self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relations with others, and purpose in life". Meanwhile, Deci and Ryan (2008) conceptualized "psychological well-being from two angles: hedonic (including the process of acquiring positive states of happiness) and eudaimonic (authentic realization of real self in all the aspects of life)". Psychological well-being enhances an individual's physical, cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and familial health, fostering the establishment of constructive social connections.

Self-esteem refers to how one feels about him/ herself. It is the assessment people make about themselves and how much their life means to them. Among the most common perceptions of self-esteem, represented by Rosenburg in 1989, is self-image as the feelings about themselves that can be favorable or unfavorable. This includes their thoughts about their competencies, for example, body image, overall feelings of their self-worth. No doubt, self confidence is a central drift toward the wide personality scale of an individual. It plays a role of a basis or foundation for mental health, which often have a tangible connection with many elements of overall adaptation and happiness. Mental health or dying with a self esteem is accordingly important for successfully covering the psychic stresses and crises that might occur in the most difficult phases of life.

Self-esteem may not be a static phenomenon; on the contrary, it is a rather multifaceted quality that constantly evolves as a result of the interaction of many components. Education in early childhood years, friends, ethic, and life making events are the factors that are essential in making someone's self-esteem grow. While it frequently comes into the spotlight during childhood and teenage years as young people work out who they are and gain confidence it is not a label that stays in the surgeon's bag forever because it can go up and down in adulthood too. Confrontations with various events, such as lifestyle modifications, setbacks, and trials in life can lead to people in losing the sense of themselves, as well as their self-worth. As a result, the work of nurturing and retaining a healthy self-esteem is the ever-filling process that requires self-sustenance and effort to withstand various obstacles and struggling with them throughout life.

It has been observed that high self-esteem is directly linked with the enhanced psychological resilience, emotional equilibrium, and, in general, satisfaction with life. It grants the ability to people to effectively deal with stress, to have both meaningful and individuals who are able to network professionally. On the other side, low degree of self-esteem is conducive to getting agitated, worried and sad. Lastly but not least, it also caters leadership to malfunctioning behaviors for instance, drug, perfectionism, and self-conflict.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study conducted by Jooyoung Kong, Kristin J. Homan, and Jaime Goldberg (2023) on "Longitudinal trajectories of adult sibling relationship quality and psychological well-being: The effect of childhood maltreatment" aimed to investigate the effect of childhood maltreatment on the trajectory of emotional closeness with siblings and whether and how this relationship influences psychological well-being in adulthood. The findings of the study revealed that childhood maltreatment was significantly associated with the trajectory of emotional closeness with siblings, indicating that maltreatment experiences negatively impact the quality of sibling relationships over time. Additionally, the study found that emotional closeness with siblings was positively associated with psychological well-being, suggesting that high-quality sibling relationships can contribute to positive psychological outcomes in adulthood. The study also highlighted the importance of considering the role of sibling relationships in the long-term effects of childhood maltreatment on psychological well-being.

The study conducted by A. Paradise and M. Kernis (2021) on "Self-esteem and psychological well-being: Implications of fragile self-esteem" is likely focused on exploring the relationship between self-esteem, particularly fragile self-esteem, and psychological well-being. The findings of the study revealed that individuals with fragile self-esteem, especially those with unrealistically positive or negative self-views, are more susceptible to fluctuations in their psychological well-being. Fragile self-esteem was likely associated with mental well-being outcomes, such as insecurity, impostor syndrome, overconfidence, and confidence. The study have highlighted the implications of fragile self-esteem for various aspects of individuals' lives, including education, job search, workaholism, and aggression, shedding light on the importance of understanding the nuances of self-esteem in relation to psychological well-being and behavior.

A study conducted by Saloni Arora and Anu Teotia (2021), on "Comparison Between Only Child and Child with Siblings on Adjustment and Personality", and after an expansive review of being body of work concerning on differences in adaptation and personality characteristics, concluded that the findings of the exploration indicates there are differences in the position of adaptation and only child are having further adaptation problems than child with siblings. Adjustment in siblings with children is lesser as having stock provides an occasion for children and teens to resolve conflict and take the

eISSN: 2589-7799 2024 April; 7 (4): 67-74

standpoint of another person both of which promotes passions of minding and concern for other people and overall promotes adaptation. It's also seen that there are differences in the personality characteristics of only child and child with siblings on Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness to gests independently.

The study conducted by D. Shepherd, S. Goedeke, J. Landon, and J. Williams (2020) on "The Impact of Sibling Relationships on Later-Life Psychological and Subjective Well-Being" which revolves around the idea that the quality of sibling relationships in adulthood has a significant impact on psychological and subjective well-being in later life. The study has investigated the influence of factors such as sibling conflict, emotional closeness, and parental favoritism on the well-being of older adults. The findings of the study suggest that older adults report high levels of sibling warmth and low levels of sibling conflict and parental favoritism. The quality of sibling relationships is positively associated with well-being and negatively associated with loneliness in later life. Sister-sister pairs have warmer sibling relationships than other gender-compositions. Sibling conflict and parental favoritism are positively associated with symptoms of depression, anxiety, hostility, and loneliness. Loneliness partially mediates the associations between sibling relationship quality and well-being. These results highlight the importance of sibling relationships in older adults' health and well-being.

The study conducted by A. Milevsky (2018) on "Parental Factors, Psychological Well-Being, and Sibling Dynamics: A Mediational Model in Emerging Adulthood" focused on exploring the mediating role of sibling relationships in the association between parental factors, such as parenting style and sibling differential treatment, and psychological well-being outcomes in emerging adulthood. The findings of the study revealed that sibling relationship quality, perceived parental marital satisfaction, and psychological well-being outcomes in emerging adulthood are interconnected. Positive sibling relationships and supportive parental factors were associated with higher levels of psychological well-being in emerging adults. This suggests that the quality of sibling relationships and parental influences can impact the well-being of individuals as they navigate the challenges of transitioning into adulthood.

The study conducted by Ashley Kronen Marotta (2015) on "The Relationship between Sibling Relationship Quality and Psychological Outcomes in Emerging Adulthood" explored the impact of sibling relationships on the psychological outcomes of emerging adults. The findings of the study indicated that positive sibling relationships are linked with high life satisfaction, especially as sibling relationships become a unique resource during late adolescence and into emerging adulthood due to shifts in socio-emotional skills and peer networks. Additionally, perceiving siblings as highly supportive is associated with high life satisfaction among emerging adults. The study also found that sibling support during adolescence predicts psychological needs during the transition into emerging adulthood, which in turn associates with life satisfaction during emerging adulthood.

A study was conducted by Bleske-Rechek, A., & Kelley, J. A. (2014) on "Birth order and personality: A within-family test using independent self-reports from both firstborn and laterborn siblings. Personality and Individual Differences." The study by utilized independent self-reports from both firstborn and laterborn siblings to examine the impact of birth order on personality traits. The findings have indicated that birth order did not significantly influence personality traits when comparing self-reported data from siblings within the same family.

The study conducted by A. Sherman, J. Lansford, and B. Volling (2006) on "Sibling relationships and best friendships in young adulthood: Warmth, conflict, and well-being" investigated the impact of sibling relationships and friendships on young adults' well-being. The hypothesis is that the quality of sibling relationships and friendships in young adulthood, characterized by warmth and low conflict, is positively associated with well-being. The findings support the hypothesis, showing that participants with harmonious sibling relationships and same-gender friends had the highest well-being. This suggests that positive sibling relationships and friendships, characterized by warmth and low conflict, contribute to young adults' overall well-being.

The study conducted by Yeh & Lempers (2004) discovered that adolescents who have a positive perception of their sibling relationships tend to have higher self-esteem. This higher self-esteem is then linked to experiencing less loneliness, depression, delinquent behaviors, and substance use. Additionally, there seems to be a two-way relationship between adolescent self-esteem and the quality of their sibling relationships. A positive sibling relationship can help boost adolescent self-esteem, and higher self-esteem predicts a more positive sibling relationship.

A study was conducted by Falbo T. (1983) on "Only children and interpersonal behavior: An experimental and survey study" delved into exploring the impact of being an only child on interpersonal behavior, sociability, and social interactions. The findings from Falbo's study likely provided insights into the differences in interpersonal behavior between only children and individuals with siblings, shedding light on the unique social dynamics experienced by only children. The findings highlighted a nuanced understanding of how sibling status influences sociability and social behaviors. They underscored the complexity of social development in only children and the potential advantages and disadvantages they may experience in social interactions.

METHODOLOGY

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to compare the psychological well-being and self-esteem among adults (18-30 years) with and without siblings.

eISSN: 2589-7799 2024 April; 7 (4): 67-74

VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

- 1. Independent variables:
- The presence or absence of siblings.
- Sibling relationships.
- 2. Dependent variables:
- · Psychological well-being.
- · Self esteem.

OBJECTIVES

- To identify the potential differences in the psychological well being among adults with and without siblings.
- To identify the potential differences in the self esteem among adults with and without siblings.

HYPOTHESES

- There will be a significant difference between the psychological well-being of adults with and adults without siblings.
- There will be a significant difference between the self-esteem of adults with and adults without siblings.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE STUDY

A sample size for this study is a total of 200 adult participants selected through purposive sampling. They were divided into two equal groups: adults with siblings (n=100) and adults without siblings (n=100) who fell in the age group of 18-30 years.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

For this particular study, Psychological Wellbeing (PWB) Scale (18-item version) developed by psychologist Carol D. Ryff, and The Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES), developed by Morris Rosenberg were used for the data collection.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE:

The participants were given the two questionnaires, and the data gathering process for the study included familiarizing the participants with the instructions, the goals of the study and the implementation o measures to ensure their privacy.

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING (PWB) SCALE (18-ITEM VERSION):

Description and scoring of the scale:

Developed by psychologist Carol D. Ryff, the 4-item Psychological Wellbeing (PWB) Scale measures six aspects of wellbeing and happiness autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self acceptance.

Higher scores indicate greater psychological well-being. The items are rated on a 6-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from "Completely disagree" to "Completely agree".

The reliability and validity of the Scales of Psychological Well-being (SPWB):

Reliability:

The internal consistency reliability coefficients for the six subscales of the SPWB ranged from 0.87 to 0.96, indicating high reliability. Test-retest reliability coefficients for the six subscales ranged from 0.78 to 0.97, demonstrating good consistency over time.

Validity:

The validity of the SPWB was assessed through various measures. In the Turkish version study, correlations between the Turkish and English forms were high, ranging from 0.94 to 0.97 for different subscales. 'The total variance explained was 68%, and factor loadings ranged from 0.30 to 0.94, indicating good validity. Fit index values of the model were also within acceptable ranges'. Additionally, the SPWB has been linked to various health outcomes in studies, further supporting its validity

ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE:

Description and scoring of the scale:

Self-esteem is assessed with Rosenberg's (1965) self-esteem scale. Each of the 10 items is given a score from 1 to 5 and higher scores indicate more positive self-esteem.

To score the questionnaire, give "Strongly Disagree" 1 point, "Disagree" 2 points, "Agree" 3 points, and "Strongly Agree" 4 points. Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 are reverse scored. Sum scores for all ten items. Keep scores on a continuous scale. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem.

The reliability and validity of the Rosenberg's self-esteem scale:

eISSN: 2589-7799 2024 April; 7 (4): 67-74

Reliability:

- The RSES has demonstrated good internal consistency reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients typically ranging from 0.70 to 0.90 across various populations and settings. This indicates that the items on the scale are consistently measuring the same underlying construct of self-esteem.
- Test-retest reliability studies have also shown the RSES to be stable over time, with scores remaining relatively consistent upon repeated administration.

Validity:

- Content validity: The items on the RSES were carefully selected by Rosenberg to reflect different aspects of self-esteem, including feelings of self-worth and self-acceptance. The scale covers a broad range of SE -related constructs, enhancing its content validity.
- Construct validity: Numerous studies have provided evidence supporting the construct validity of the RSES. For example, the scale has been found to correlate positively with measures of positive affect, life satisfaction, and social support, while correlating negatively with measures of depression, anxiety, and loneliness. These patterns of correlations support the underlying construct of self-esteem as measured by the RSES.
- Criterion-related validity: The RSES has demonstrated criterion-related validity by showing meaningful associations with various outcomes and measures related to psychological well-being, academic achievement, interpersonal relationships, and overall adjustment. Higher scores on the RSES are consistently associated with better outcomes across these domains.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

SPSS software was utilized for the investigation. Corelational analysis and t tests were employed to support the hypothesis.

RESULTS

Based on the table, the correlation between PWB and SE is 0.710, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This means that there is a strong positive relationship between PWB and SE, meaning that higher levels of self-esteem are

associated with higher levels of PWB. This is an expected finding, as self-esteem is often considered a key component of PWB.

The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.710 indicates a moderate to strong correlation between the two variables. This means that a large proportion of the variation in PWB can be explained by variation in SE.

It's important to note that correlation does not imply causation, so while PWB and SE are correlated, it does not necessarily mean that one causes the other. Nonetheless, this correlation suggests that interventions aimed at improving self-esteem may also have a positive impact on PWB

Table 1 Correlations

		PWB	SE
PWB	Pearson Correlation	1	710**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		000
	N	200	200
	Pearson Correlation	710**	1
SE	Sig. (2-tailed)	000	
	N	200	200

^{**.} Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Fable 2 Group Statistics

Tuble 2 Group Statistics							
	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
PWB	Adults with siblings	100	89.2500	12.45385	1.24539		
	Adults without siblings	100	80.8300	14.77717	1.47772		
SE	Adults with siblings	100	27.3000	2.93189	29319		
	Adults without siblings	100	25.3200	3.17465	31746		

eISSN: 2589-7799 2024 April; 7 (4): 67-74

Table 2, provides the group statistics for the PWB and SE measures for adults with and without siblings. The table includes the mean, standard deviation, and standard error mean for each group and variable.

For PWB, adults with siblings had a mean score of 89.2500, with a standard deviation of 12.45385 and a standard error mean of 1.24539. Adults without siblings had a mean score of 80.8300, with a standard deviation of 14.77717 and a standard error mean of 1.47772.

For SE, adults with siblings had a mean score of 27.3000, with a standard deviation of 2.93189 and a standard error mean of .29319. Adults without siblings had a mean score of 25.3200, with a standard deviation of 3.17465 and a standard error mean of .31746.

Table 3 Independent Samples Test

Variable	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference
Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	4.357	198	0.000	8.42
Self-Esteem (SE)	4.582	198	0.000	1.98

The table presents the results of an independent samples t-test, which is used to compare the means of two independent groups on a continuous variable.

The t-test provides a t-value, which is a measure of the difference between the two group means relative to the variability in the data. The t-value is used to calculate the p-value, which indicates the probability of obtaining the observed difference between the two group means if the null hypothesis is true.

For PWB, the t-value is 4.357, the degrees of freedom (df) is 198, and the p-value is less than 0.001 (0.000) and the mean difference is 8.42. This indicates that 'there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of psychological well-being, with the first group having a higher mean score than the second group'.

For SE, the t-value is 4.582, the degrees of freedom (df) is 198, and the p-value is less than 0.001 (0.000) and the mean difference is 1.98. This indicates that 'there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of self-esteem, with the first group having a higher mean score than the second group'.

Overall, the table suggests that there are significant differences between the two groups in terms of PWB and SE, indicating adults with siblings have higher PWB and SE scores than adults without siblings, suggesting that having siblings may have a positive impact on PWB and SE in adulthood.

DISCUSSION

As children, individuals typically spend a significant amount of time in the same household as their siblings, which lead to forming enduring bonds that often persist into adulthood and throughout their lives. Similarly, as adults, it is often seen that they maintain close relationships with their siblings, surpassing other social connections. These relationships evolve over time, they are initially characterized by childhood conflicts yet developing into enduring bonds that last well into old age.

An only child is someone who grows up without siblings, typically receiving significant attention and resources from parents or peers. This unique upbringing can result in lifelong relationships characterized by close bonds formed with parents or peers, as siblings are absent to share parental responsibilities.

The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between sibling status (having siblings vs. being an only child) and two key psychological constructs: PWB and SE among young adults aged 18-30 years. The findings revealed significant differences in both PWB and SE between adults with and without siblings, with individuals with siblings reporting higher levels of both constructs.

The results indicated a strong positive correlation between PWB and SE for both groups, suggesting that individuals with higher levels of psychological well-being also tend to exhibit higher levels of self-esteem, and vice versa. It suggests that individuals who perceive themselves positively in terms of their psychological functioning are also more likely to have positive perceptions of themselves overall, including their self-worth and self-esteem.

Consistent with previous literature, this study found that adults with siblings reported significantly higher levels of PWB compared to those without siblings. This finding supports the notion that sibling relationships can have a positive impact on psychological well-being by providing emotional support, companionship, and opportunities for social interaction and learning (Brody et al., 1998; McHale et al., 2012). Siblings may serve as sources of social support during challenging times, contribute to the development of interpersonal skills, and provide a sense of belonging and connectedness within the family system.

Similarly, the results revealed that adults with siblings also reported higher levels of self-esteem compared to those without siblings. This finding is consistent with previous research suggesting that sibling relationships play a crucial role in shaping individuals' self-concepts and self-perceptions (Feinberg et al., 2012; Tucker et al., 2019). Siblings can serve as important social comparison targets and sources of feedback, which may influence individuals' self-evaluations and self-esteem development (Festinger, 1954; Updegraff et al., 2001).

eISSN: 2589-7799 2024 April; 7 (4): 67-74

Limitations

- Limited sample size: The study only included 200 participants in each group, which may not be representative of the larger population of adults with and without siblings.
- Lack of generalizability: The study only included adults from a specific geographical region, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other populations.
- Correlational design: The study used a correlational design, which cannot establish causality or directionality of the relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem.
- Self-report measures: The study relied on self-report measures of psychological well-being and self-esteem, which may be subject to response bias or social desirability effects.
- Lack of longitudinal data: The study only included cross-sectional data, which may not capture changes in psychological well-being and self-esteem over time.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study set out to explore the relationship between sibling status and two fundamental aspects of psychological functioning: PWB and SE among young adults. The findings provide robust support for the hypotheses, as both hypotheses were met with statistical significance. 'This study contributes to the growing body of literature on the role of sibling relationships in shaping psychological well-being and self-esteem among young adults. The findings highlight the potential benefits of having siblings in promoting positive psychological outcomes during the transition to adulthood'. Understanding the dynamics of sibling relationships and their implications for psychological functioning can inform interventions aimed at enhancing individuals' well-being and self-esteem across the lifespan.

Firstly, the results revealed a substantial difference in PWB between adults with and without siblings. Specifically, adults with siblings reported significantly higher levels of PWB compared to their counterparts who did not have siblings. This finding underscores the potential positive impact of sibling relationships on individuals' overall psychological functioning during the critical period of young adulthood.

Secondly, this study found a significant difference in SE between adults with and without siblings. Consistent with the hypothesis, adults with siblings demonstrated higher levels of SE than those without siblings. This suggests that the presence of siblings may contribute to the development and maintenance of positive self-perceptions and self-worth among young adults.

Overall, the results highlight the importance of sibling relationships in shaping PWB and SE during the transition to adulthood. These findings have implications for understanding the role of family dynamics in promoting positive psychological outcomes and may inform interventions aimed at enhancing individuals' well-being and self-esteem across the lifespan.

Implications

Understanding the implications of the study findings for only children reveals both potential challenges and strengths in terms of PWB and SE Without siblings, only children may face difficulties in social comparison, potentially impacting their self-esteem development and social support networks within the family. However, they may benefit from increased parental attention and autonomy, fostering strong parent-child bonds and independent skills. Interventions and support for only children should focus on promoting peer relationships, enhancing parental involvement, and building SE through strengths-based approaches. By recognizing the unique experiences of only children and addressing their specific needs, interventions can facilitate positive psychological outcomes and resilience in this population.

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