SIBLING SUPPORT AS A FACTOR OF EMOTIONAL STABILITY AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract: *This conference thesis examines sibling support as a socio-psychological factor of emotional stability among university students. The transition to university life is associated with academic pressure, social comparison, identity development, and increased autonomy. In this period, siblings may function as emotionally significant figures because they combine shared family history with peer-like communication. Drawing on international sibling research and Uzbek/Russian-language literature on family values and child upbringing, the thesis argues that sibling support contributes to emotional stability through emotional listening, practical advice, shared coping, and a sense of belonging. The proposed empirical design includes students aged 18-25 who have at least one sibling. It is expected that higher perceived sibling support will be positively associated with emotional stability and negatively associated with emotional tension. The findings may be useful for student counseling services and family-based psychological prevention programs.*

Keywords: *sibling support; emotional stability; university students; family psychology; Uzbek family; young adulthood*

Introduction

University life is a developmental stage in which young people face academic requirements, professional self-determination, new social relations, and psychological uncertainty. Many studies examine parental and peer support in student adaptation, but sibling support remains less visible. This is a significant gap because siblings often occupy a unique position between family and peer worlds.

A brother or sister may understand the student's family background, parental expectations, economic difficulties, and emotional history. At the same time, communication with siblings is often less formal than communication with parents. Therefore, sibling support can become an important source of emotional stability during the university years.

In Uzbek families, sibling support is also connected with cultural values such as respect, mutual assistance, responsibility for younger family members, and family solidarity. Uzbek and Russian-language works on Uzbek family traditions emphasize that the family is a central space for moral upbringing and social responsibility (Alimov, 2014; Kurbonova, 2020). These cultural norms may increase the psychological importance of sibling bonds.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze sibling support as a factor of emotional stability among university students.

The research questions are:

1. What forms of sibling support are most meaningful for university students?
2. Is perceived sibling support associated with emotional stability?
3. Do gender, birth order, number of siblings, and frequency of communication influence perceived sibling support?

4. How can sibling support be used as a resource in student psychological counseling?

Theoretical Background

Sibling relationships are multidimensional bonds that may include warmth, closeness, conflict, rivalry, and relative power (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Brody (1998) noted that sibling relationship quality is shaped by both family processes and individual characteristics. McHale, Updegraff, and Whiteman (2012) showed that siblings influence social competence, adjustment, and psychological well-being across childhood and adolescence.

Russian-language studies also emphasize the developmental role of sibling relations. Zalevskaya (2016) views sibling experience as a factor in personality formation and interaction with the close social environment. Bulygina (2021) summarizes findings showing that sibling relations are connected with prosocial behavior, aggression, self-attitude, and life satisfaction. Almazova (2013) demonstrates that even adult sibling relationships may differ by levels of closeness, trust, conflict, and emotional distance.

Emotional stability refers to the ability to maintain psychological balance, regulate negative emotions, and respond constructively to stress. For university students, emotional stability is important in coping with examinations, social comparison, academic failure, and uncertainty about the future. Sibling support may strengthen emotional stability by providing trust, advice, humor, shared memories, and practical help.

Methodology

The proposed study may be conducted among 150-200 university students aged 18-25 who have at least one sibling. A quantitative survey design

is recommended. The questionnaire may include three blocks: demographic information, perceived sibling support, and emotional stability.

Main variables:

- Independent variable: perceived sibling support.
- Dependent variable: emotional stability.
- Control variables: gender, age, birth order, number of siblings, age gap, living arrangement, and frequency of communication with siblings.

Data may be analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, t-test or ANOVA, and simple regression analysis. If the conference format allows, qualitative comments may also be collected to describe culturally specific forms of sibling support in Uzbek families, such as advice from an elder sibling, help with family responsibilities, or emotional support during academic stress.

Expected Results

It is expected that students who report higher levels of sibling support will demonstrate higher emotional stability. Emotional listening, practical advice, and regular communication are expected to be the strongest forms of support. Students with emotionally close siblings may report lower levels of tension and stronger confidence in coping with academic difficulties.

The study may also reveal differences by birth order. Elder siblings may evaluate support through responsibility and protection, while younger siblings may evaluate it through advice, emotional comfort, and guidance. Gender may also influence the form of support, especially in culturally traditional family contexts where brothers and sisters may perform different family roles.

Scientific Novelty

The scientific novelty of the thesis lies in interpreting sibling support not only as a personal relationship but also as a culturally embedded psychological

resource. The topic connects international theories of sibling relationships with Uzbek family values and Russian-language research on sibling experience. This approach can broaden student psychology by including the sibling subsystem as an important factor of emotional adaptation.

Practical Significance

- Student counseling centers may include sibling support in psychological assessment and intervention planning.
- Psychoeducational programs may encourage students to use healthy family resources during stress.
- Parents may be advised to reduce destructive comparison between siblings and strengthen fair emotional recognition.
- Universities may design family-oriented prevention programs for students with adaptation difficulties.

Conclusion

Sibling support is an important but often underestimated factor of emotional stability among university students. Brothers and sisters may provide emotional closeness, practical help, shared coping, and a sense of family continuity. In Uzbek families, these forms of support are strengthened by cultural values such as responsibility, respect, and mutual assistance. At the same time, support is most effective when it is based on fairness, emotional recognition, and voluntary closeness rather than only on formal duty. Future empirical research on this topic can contribute to family psychology, student counseling, and culturally sensitive prevention programs.

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