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The Influence of Sibling Rivalry on Self-Expression among Young Adults

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Abstract: ***This study investigates the relationship between sibling rivalry and self-expression among young adults, examining potential influences and gender differences. Through a review of existing literature and empirical analysis, the study explores whether sibling rivalry affects self-expression and if gender moderates this relationship. Data from 200 participants revealed no significant correlation between sibling rivalry and self-expression. Additionally, regression analysis indicates no statistical influence of sibling rivalry on self-expression. Independent sample t-tests show no significant gender differences in sibling rivalry or self-expression scores. The findings suggest that sibling rivalry may not directly impact self-expression among young adults, irrespective of gender. Further research is warranted to explore additional factors contributing to variations in self-expression within sibling relationships.***
Keywords: sibling rivalry, self-expression

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Sibling Rivalry

Sibling rivalry is defined as competition between siblings for the love, affection, and attention of one or both parents or for other recognition or gain (Leung et.al, 1991). Sibling rivalry is found in most if not all, families and is considered fundamental to family life. A child who feels threatened of losing parental affection and love may react with rejection or hate towards a new sibling who is often perceived as an intruder (Leung et.al, 1991). This is more common if the child feels insecure due to overprotection, excessive domination, parental impatience, or excessive discipline. (Leung et.al, 1991) “Siblings are those with whom one most closely shares genetic, family, social class and historical background and to 2 whom one is tied for a lifetime by a network of interlocking family relationships” (White, 2001, p555). Sibling rivalry can be defined as competition, animosity, and negative behaviour among brothers and sisters. Sibling rivalry is also sometimes seen as being about a power struggle and according to a famous psychologist, Dr Alfred Adler, a "subconscious strive for power”. The prevalence of sibling rivalry is a great impact on child development, in order to reduce their emotional and behavioral disorders later, Sibling rivalry is a common problem, faced by parents with more than one child. It usually starts after the birth of a second child and it affects both the children and parents (Nithyapriya et.al, 2019) Sigmund Freud viewed the sibling relationship primarily in terms of rivalry for parental love. In 1899, Freud, reflecting on the fierceness of children's dreams, wrote: ‘Hostile feelings towards brothers and sisters must be far more frequent in childhood than the unseeing eye of the adult observer can perceive. (Freud S. *Die Traumdentung. [The Interpretation of Dreams*.] Leipzig: Deuticke, 1899) The term ‘sibling rivalry’ was only introduced in the 1930s, by the US child psychiatrist David Levy.

Alfred Adler was the first to develop a comprehensive theory of personality, psychological disorders and psychotherapy, which represented an alternative to the views of Freud (Adler, 1964, p. ix–x). One facet of his complex body of work involves the importance of birth order for youth outcomes (Adler, 1964). Adlerian Theory suggests that birth order and the number of siblings affect a child’s potential. Adler called upon the importance of understanding the Family Constellation (Adler, 1964).

Sibling rivalry is a common phenomenon characterized by varying degrees of verbal or physical conflict, frustration, or demands for attention among siblings. When managed effectively, healthy competition between siblings fosters the acquisition of vital social, interpersonal, and cognitive skills crucial for child development. However, mishandling this rivalry can lead to long-term psychological issues. Strategies such as appropriate spacing between children, preparing existing siblings for the arrival of a new one, and avoiding situations that may provoke jealousy are recommended to mitigate rivalry. Parents should refrain from making comparisons or showing favoritism between siblings. Addressing the root cause rather than the outward manifestations of rivalry is essential. Patience, love, understanding, common sense, and humor are key parental skills in managing sibling rivalry effectively. (Leung et.al, 1991)

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Sibling rivalry is a prevalent phenomenon within families, often presenting significant stress and challenges for parents. The introduction of a new sibling commonly triggers emotions of displacement, frustration, anger, and perceived lack of affection among older siblings. Factors such as age, gender, personality traits, and parental behaviors influence the intensity of sibling rivalry. Older siblings typically respond to the arrival of a new baby with various reactions, including aggression towards the newborn, regression in behavior, seeking attention, as well as demonstrating both independence and maturity. Preemptive guidance is advised to assist parents in adequately preparing their older child for the impending arrival of a new sibling. Strategies for managing sibling rivalry encompass fostering open communication between parents and children, ensuring equitable treatment of siblings, refraining from intervention in sibling conflicts unless necessary, utilizing distraction techniques, and providing opportunities for separation. Parents can mitigate feelings of jealousy between siblings by cultivating a supportive, nurturing environment that fosters a sense of security and affection for each child. (Sawicki, 1997) Mammal life history traits relating to growth and reproduction are extremely diverse. Sibling rivalry may contribute to selection pressures influencing this diversity because individuals that are relatively large at birth typically have an advantage in competition for milk. However, selection for increased growth rate is likely to be constrained by kin selection and physiological costs. (Stockley et.al, 2002)

B. Self-Expression

Carl Rogers, a prominent figure in humanistic psychology, emphasized the importance of self-expression in therapy. He believed that personal growth and self-actualization occur when individuals express their genuine feelings and thoughts in a non-judgmental environment (Roger, 1940). “We define self-expression as expressing one's thoughts and feelings, and these expressions can be accomplished through words, choices or actions.” (Kim & Ko, 2007). Self-expression is so-called in order to mark out my subject matter from those phenomena in which words express ideas or concepts, and sentences express propositions. (Green, 2008). Self-expression is defined as “assertion of one’s individual traits” (Self-Expression, n.d.) and individuals have dual motivations to have their traits be seen both positively and accurately (Goffman, 1959; McKenna & Bargh, 1999; Swann, 1983).

There is no single theory of self-expression in psychology, however there are various studies and hypotheses on this subject. For example, according to Kim and Ko, self-expression is one of the most highly-regarded and venerated values in Western civilization due to the near-deification of “the individual” in society. Not only is self-expression a vital practice of Western culture but it is also baked into the very roots of psychology. After all, psychology is all about the study of the mind, including the self, others, and groups of people. The way we learn about the mind is through the expression of individuals verbally or otherwise (Kim & Ko, 2007).

“The journey of self-discovery is the most important journey we can take” (De la Huerta, 2014). self-expression is a vital piece of the puzzle that is fulfillment in life; it allows us to be our best selves, reach our full potential, and make valuable contributions to the world we live in. (Huerta, 2014) In certain cultural contexts, the emphasis on self-expression may be viewed as indicative of egoism and a lack of strong social connections, contrasting with the perspective held in many Western societies where self-expression is regarded as essential for achieving happiness and personal fulfillment (Welzel, 2010).

The studies on sibling rivalry delve into the multifaceted nature of familial relationships, emphasizing the intricate dynamics that can shape sibling interactions from childhood through adulthood. Through methodologies ranging from exhaustive literature reviews to quantitative analyses and case studies, researchers uncover key factors influencing sibling dynamics. These include the impact of parenting styles, with authoritative parenting emerging as a protective factor against sibling conflicts, while neglectful or inconsistent parenting exacerbates such tensions. Moreover, studies explore the psychological ramifications of sibling rivalry, revealing its potential to manifest in various forms such as jealousy, conflict, and even bullying, which can significantly affect children's emotional well-being. Additionally, twin studies shed light on in utero competition and its implications for birthweight and survival, offering insights into early sibling dynamics that persist throughout life. On the other hand, research on self-expression illuminates the cultural dimensions of authenticity and identity construction. Cultural norms play a pivotal role in shaping individuals' perceptions of genuine expression, as evidenced by studies comparing Western and East Asian cultural contexts. Moreover, investigations into the effects of self-expression on well-being underscore its positive impact, with genuine expression linked to increased autonomy satisfaction and overall positive emotions. Furthermore, the role of technology in facilitating self-expression, particularly among marginalized populations such as minimally verbal children with autism, highlights the potential for innovative interventions to empower individuals in their communication and self-expression. Together, these studies provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricate interplay between familial relationships, cultural norms, and individual expression, offering valuable insights into the human experience across diverse contexts.

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II. METHOD

A. Research Design

Correlation: Correlational research design examines the connection between two or more variables without altering any independent variable. Its goal is to evaluate both the extent and the direction of the relationship between these variables.

B. Sample

The sample size for this study is determined to be 200 participants. Of which 100 are females and 100 are males. The selection of this sample size is based on several factors, including the research objectives, the anticipated effect size, and practical considerations such as time and resources. With a sample size of 200, the researcher aims to achieve adequate statistical power to detect meaningful relationships and differences between variables of interest. Additionally, a larger sample size enhances the generalizability of the study findings to the broader population, increasing the study's external validity.

The present study endeavors to examine the influence, correlation, and gender differences concerning sibling rivalry and self-expression among young adults. Data collection was facilitated through an online platform, specifically Google Forms, which were administered to individuals with siblings. Through a rigorous questionnaire tailored to capture nuanced aspects of sibling rivalry, self-expression, and pertinent demographic variables.

C. Technique

In employing a purposive sampling technique for participant selection, the researcher deliberately chooses individuals or groups based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. Unlike random sampling methods, where participants are selected by chance, purposive sampling enables the researcher to strategically target individuals who possess predetermined characteristics or unique experiences related to the study's focus on sibling rivalry and self-expression. By selecting participants in this manner, the researcher can ensure that the sample comprises individuals who can provide rich and insightful data, thereby maximizing the study's relevance and depth.

The use of purposive sampling in this study is advantageous for several reasons. Firstly, it allows the researcher to select participants who are most likely to contribute meaningful insights to the research topic. By targeting individuals who have experienced sibling rivalry or have strong opinions on self-expression within sibling relationships, the researcher can gather in-depth data that aligns closely with the study's objectives. Additionally, purposive sampling enables the researcher to control for potential confounding variables and ensures that the sample represents a diverse range of perspectives and experiences related to sibling dynamics and self-expression.

Overall, the use of purposive sampling in this research methodology enhances the study's validity and depth by enabling the researcher to select participants who possess relevant characteristics or experiences. This approach aligns closely with the study's focus on exploring the relationship between sibling rivalry and self-expression and ensures that the data collected are meaningful and insightful. By strategically choosing participants, the researcher can maximize the study's potential to contribute valuable insights to the field of psychology and advance our understanding of sibling dynamics and their impact on self-expression.

D. Tools for the Study

1) Adult Sibling Relationship Questionnaire - Short-Form (ASRQ-S)

Adult Sibling Relationship Questionnaire - Short-Form (ASRQ-S; Lanthier et al., 2000). The ASRQ-S assesses sibling relationship qualities in young and older adults. It assesses the participants' perceptions of their behaviours and feelings toward their siblings, as well as their perceptions of their siblings' behaviours and feelings toward them. The ASRQ-S consists of 47 items that are grouped into 8 scales. Based on factor analysis, however, they are scored along three dimensions: Warmth (18 items), Conflict (17 items), and Rivalry (12 items). For the purpose of the current study, only the warmth and conflict scales were administered and used.

A self-administered online questionnaire known as the short form version of the Adult Sibling Relationship Questionnaire ("ASRQ-S") (Lanthier et al., 2000) was employed for the collection of data. The ASRQ-S is concerned with the respondents' perception of their own behaviour and feelings towards their sibling and their siblings' behaviour and feelings towards them (Riggio, 2000). The ASRQ-S makes use of Likert scales which can be used in questionnaires in order to compare strength of feeling or perception (McNeill & Chapman, 2005). The first page of the questionnaire is a demographic sheet designed to ascertain details such as gender, age and family information such as number of siblings and position in family. Respondents were also asked to enter their mother's maiden name so that sibling dyads could be identified and their replies compared with each other. The ASRQ-S consists of 47 items which are spread over eight scales designed to investigate three factors; Warmth, Conflict and Rivalry.

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Warmth consists of three scales: Intimacy, Emotional Support and Knowledge. Conflict also consists of three scales: Quarrelling, Antagonism and Dominance. By using a weighting of items for each of these scales, responses are scored on either a 3 or 4-point scale ranging from 1 to 3 or 1 to 4. Rivalry is made up of Maternal and Paternal Rivalry and these scales were scored as "the absolute value of deviations from the mid-point of the scale" (Lanthier et al., 2000). Scores ranged from 0 – 2, 0 indicating absence of rivalry and 2 indicating maximum rivalry.

Test-retest correlations in the original ASRQ were found to be statistically reliable (Stocker et al., 1997). The ASRQ-S has been shown to correlate highly with the original ASRQ (r = .95 for Warmth and r = .97 for Conflict) and the ASRQ-S has been found to be internally consistent (α=.96 for Warmth, α=.93 for Conflict, and α= .91 for Rivalry) (Lanthier et al., 2000). Punch (2005) suggests that the use of a pre-existing measuring instrument, such as the ASRQ-S, is recommended particularly 21 in cases where the variable is complex, in order to compare findings with existing studies and because the more an instrument is used, the more is learned about its properties.

2) The College Self-Expression Scale

The College Self-Expression Scale is a 50 item self-report inventory which is designed to measure assertiveness in college students. The scale taps three dimensions of assertiveness (positive assertiveness, negative assertiveness, and self-denial) in a variety of interpersonal contexts: family, strangers, business relations, authority figures, and like and opposite sex peers. Normative, reliability, and validity data are presented.

In all of the samples, males achieved slightly higher scores than females. The test-retest reliability coefficients for samples one and two were 0.89 and 0.90, respectively.

As expected, the College Self-Expression Scale correlates positively and significantly with the following Adjective Check List Scales: Number checked, Defensiveness, Favorable, Self-Confidence, Achievement, Dominance, Interception, Heterosexuality, Exhibition, Autonomy, and Change (Table 3). Gough and Heilbrun s (1965) definitions of these scales suggest characteristics which typify assertiveness. The assertive individual is expressive, spontaneous, well defended, confident, and able to influence and lead others. Significant negative correlations were obtained with the Unfavorable, Succorance, Abasement, Deference, and Counseling Readiness Scales. These results are consistent with non-assertiveness and indicate an in-adequate and negative self-evaluation, feelings of inferiority, a tendency to be over solicitous of emotional support from others, and excessive interpersonal anxiety (Counseling Readiness). Descriptions of the Self-Control, Lability, Endurance, Order, Nurturance, Affiliation, and Aggression scales by Gough and Heilbrun (1965) suggested that these variables would not be significantly related to responses on the CSES. This, in fact, was the case. The confirmation of a nonsignificant correlation between Aggression and the CSES is of especial importance since aggressiveness is often mistaken for assertiveness. The correlation between Personal Adjustment and assertiveness, al-though positive, did not achieve significance. However, the correlation of the CSES with other scales notably the Counseling Readiness and Unfavorable Scales suggests poorer adjustment on the part of low scorers on the CSES.

The College Self-Expression Scale. The College Self-expression Scale (CSES; Galassi et al., 1974) is a 50-item self-report measure that assesses three dimensions of assertiveness (positive, negative, and self-denial) in college students. Positive assertions include expressions of positive feelings such as approval, love, agreement, admiration, and affection. Negative assertiveness consists of expressing negative feelings including irritation, disagreement, justified anger, and discontent. Self-denial consists of exaggerated concern for the feelings of others, excessive apologizing, and undue interpersonal anxiety. Items measure respondents' level of assertiveness in a variety of interpersonal contexts and are rated on a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (almost always) to 4 (never or rarely). Respondents indicate how they generally express themselves towards different individuals including members of the opposite sex, authority figures, family members, and strangers. The scale contains 21 positively phrased items and 29 negatively phrased items. Items are scored in the direction of assertiveness; thus high total scores indicate a generalized assertive response pattern and low total scores indicate a generalized nonassertive response pattern. Strong construct validity and concurrent validity for the scale have been reported. The test-retest reliability coefficients for the entire measure based on a 2-week interval with 2 samples ranged from 0.89 to 0.90 (Galassi et al., 1974).

III. RESULTS

The current research aims to explore the impact, association, and distinctions based on gender in relation to sibling rivalry and self-expression among individuals in their early adulthood. This part deals with the results and interpretation of the results obtained from data collected using different tools. IBM SPSS Statistics version 25 was used for conducting the statistical analysis of the data, simple linear regression, and Pearson correlation coefficient will be used to analyse sibling rivalry and self-expression.

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To address the hypothesis of the study, independent sample t-tests will be conducted to compare sibling rivalry and self-expression between the males and females.

Hypothesis: *There is a significant relationship between sibling rivalry and self-expression among young adults*

Table no. 2: Pearson correlation coefficient table

Variables	n	Mean	SD	1
Sibling rivalry	200	95.11	24.462	0.019
Self-expression	200	122.74	18.144	0.019

The Pearson correlation coefficient was conducted to assess the significant relationship between sibling rivalry and self-expression among young adults. Findings show that there was no statistically significant correlation between the two variables, n = 200, p > 0.05, hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis: *Sibling rivalry has a significant influence on self-expression among young adults*

Table no. 3: Simple linear regression table

Variables	Regression weights	β beta coefficient	R^2	F	P
Sibling rivalry	0.025	0.019	0.000	0.069	0.793
Self- expression	0.025	0.019	0.000		

Simple linear regression was conducted to assess whether sibling rivalry has a significant influence on self-expression among young adults. Findings show that there was no statistical influence of sibling rivalry on self-expression, n = 200, p > 0.05, hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis: *There is a significant difference in self-expression scores between male and female young adults*

Table no. 4: Independent sample t-test table

Variables	*Gender*	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*SE*	*t*	*df*	*p*
Sibling rivalry	Female	100	124.56	16.654	1.665	1.422	193.463	0.209
	Male	100	120.92	19.434	1.943	1.422		

An Independent sample t-test was conducted to assess the significant difference in self-expression scores between male and female young adults. Findings show that there was no statistical difference in self-expression scores between male and female young adults, n = 100, p > 0.05, hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis: *There is a significant difference in sibling rivalry scores between male and female young adults*

Table no. 5: Independent sample t-test table

Variables	*Gender*	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*SE*	*t*	*df*	*p*
Self-expression	Female	100	93.48	21.854	2.185	-1.116	190.323	0.568
	Male	100	97.04	26.789	2.679	-1.116		

An Independent sample t-test was conducted to assess the significant difference in sibling rivalry scores between male and female young adults. Findings show that there was no statistical difference in sibling rivalry scores between male and female young adults, n = 100, p > 0.05, hence the alternative hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted.

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IV. DISCUSSION

In the analysis done by the researcher, the findings show that statistical analyses examining the relationship between sibling rivalry and self-expression among young adults present intriguing insights into the dynamics of these variables within this demographic. Initially, the descriptive table (Table 1) illustrates the distribution of sibling rivalry and self-expression scores by age and gender, indicating an equal representation of 100 females and 100 males aged between 18-26. Notably, the data highlights the prevalence of Indian ethnicity within the sample population.

The subsequent analyses aimed to explore the hypothesized relationship between sibling rivalry and self-expression. The Pearson correlation coefficient (Table 2) revealed a non-significant correlation between the two variables, implying that variations in sibling rivalry do not significantly predict levels of self-expression among young adults. This finding was further corroborated by the results of the simple linear regression analysis (Table 3), which demonstrated no statistically significant influence of sibling rivalry on self-expression.

Moreover, the investigation extended to examining gender differences in self-expression scores (Table 4) and sibling rivalry scores (Table 5) among young adults. Both independent sample t-tests failed to find any significant differences between male and female participants, suggesting that gender does not significantly impact levels of self-expression or sibling rivalry in this population.

In light of these findings, it is evident that the initial hypotheses positing significant relationships between sibling rivalry, self-expression, and gender among young adults are not supported by the data. This challenges previous assumptions and underscores the complexity of these constructs within this demographic. Future research could delve deeper into potential moderating factors or contextual influences to better understand the dynamics of sibling relationships and self-expression among young adults.

The study “Sibling Rivalry and Offspring Conflict: A Review” sheds light on the escalating challenges faced by siblings who find themselves victimized or demoralized by their family members, whether brothers or sisters. Instead of concealing these problems, families must seek assistance when needed. However, in this research, there was no mention of the self-expression of the siblings being affected

“A case study on sibling rivalry and the use of a social skills training model” The purpose of this study was to utilize social skills training for an individual child to improve her relationship with her siblings. The social skills training sessions specifically targeted aspects such as warmth, rivalry, conflict, and status/power dynamics between the two siblings. The findings indicated that there was not a significant difference between the pre and post-test results. While there was a slight increase in warmth and a decrease in rivalry, there was no notable change in the level of conflict, and there was a minor decrease in relative status/power from the pre-test to the post-test. These factors appeared to be largely unaffected by the social skills training sessions and did not lead to an improvement in the sibling relationship. In this study only categories of sibling rivalry were explored and not the overall influence of sibling rivalry on self-expression.

Self-expression is currently a prevalent trend, with more people turning to social media platforms, particularly Twitter, to convey themselves positively and authentically. In this study, researchers aimed to determine if self-expression on Twitter results in others perceiving individuals positively and accurately. The findings indicated that, on the whole, these Twitter users were perceived in ways that were consistent with the norm and showed a significant agreement between self-perception and how others viewed them. In other words, social media self-expression can lead to both favorable and precise perceptions by others. This study also noted that there were variations in how different individuals were perceived, suggesting that some were evaluated more positively and accurately than others. There was no relation between self-expression to sibling rivalry.

In another research study, being true to oneself within interpersonal relationships offers several advantages, yet research has not made a clear distinction between the internal feeling of authenticity and the outward display of authentic behavior. To address this gap, four studies were conducted to develop and validate a scale designed to measure two distinct types of self-expression: authentic and inauthentic. The results consistently confirmed a two-factor structure, revealing two different ways of expressing oneself: genuinely and insincerely. This study only focused on the self-expression of an individual and their feelings, there was no mention of sibling rivalry in this research.

Accordingly, as there is no significance influence and relationship between two given variables and also doesn’t have any significant difference in gender, it can be said that this study supports the findings of the previous researches.

V. CONCLUSION

The study conducted on sibling rivalry and self-expression among young adults sought to explore the relationship between these two variables and any potential influence of one variable to another and also gender.

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Through a review of existing literature and the examination of relevant research studies, it was observed that there is limited research specifically addressing the correlation between sibling rivalry and self-expression. However, the findings of this study indicate that there is no significant relationship between sibling rivalry and self-expression among young adults. Additionally, gender does not appear to play a significant role in either the relationship between sibling rivalry and self-expression or in the influence of sibling rivalry on self-expression.

While previous research has highlighted the challenges and dynamics within sibling relationships, particularly in the context of rivalry and conflict, the present study contributes to the understanding by focusing on self-expression as a potential outcome of these interactions. Despite the widely acknowledged importance of self-expression in interpersonal relationships and personal development, the findings suggest that sibling rivalry may not have a direct impact on the self-expression of young adults.

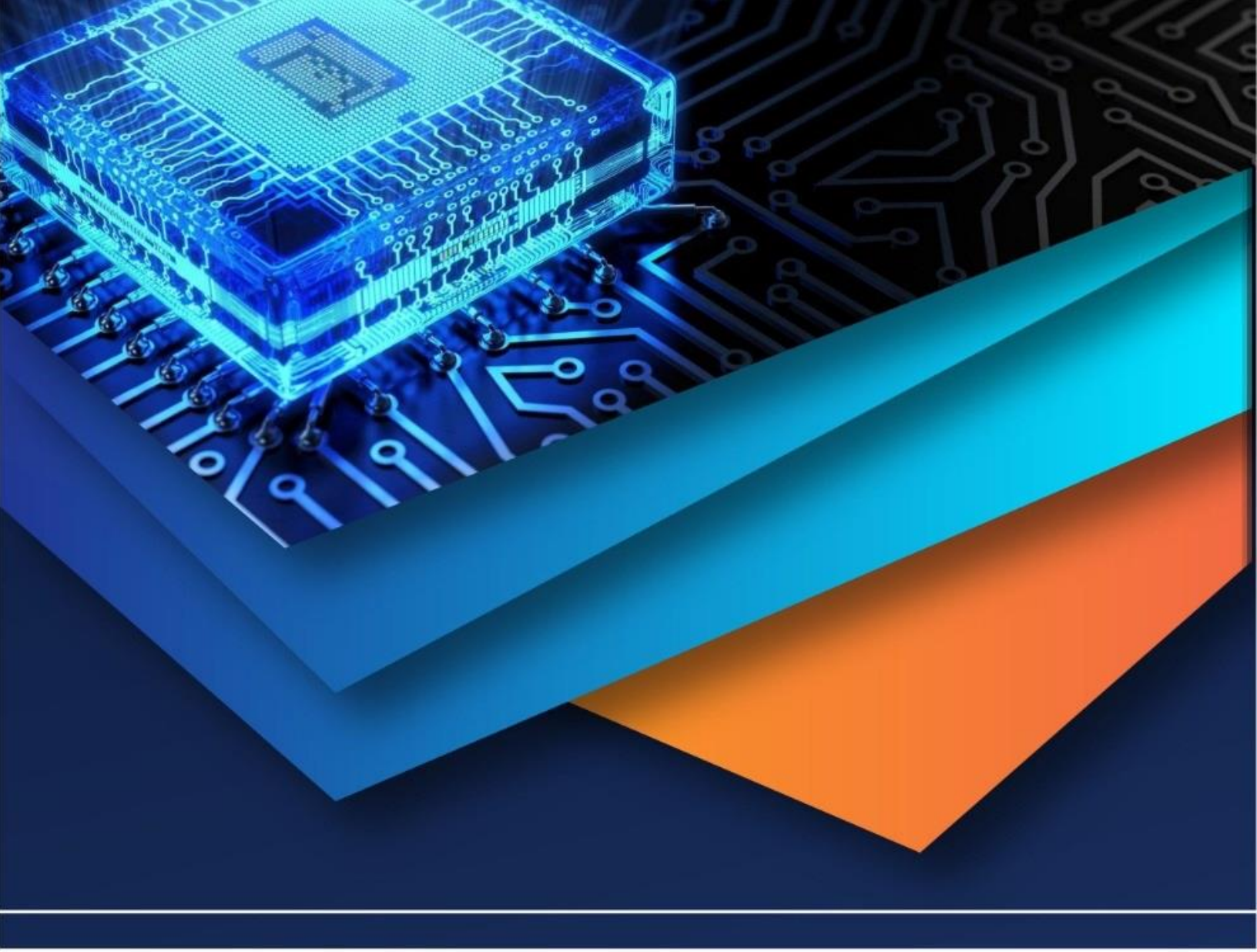
It is essential to recognize the complexity of sibling relationships and the multitude of factors that can influence individual development and expression. While sibling rivalry may be a prevalent phenomenon within families, its effects on self-expression appear to be minimal, at least among the cohort studied here. This underscores the need for further research to explore additional factors that may contribute to variations in self-expression among individuals.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing insights into the relationship between sibling rivalry and self-expression among young adults. The findings suggest that while sibling rivalry may be a common aspect of familial dynamics, it does not significantly impact the self-expression of individuals in this demographic. Moreover, gender does not appear to play a significant role in this relationship. Further research is warranted to delve deeper into the intricacies of sibling dynamics and their implications for individual development and expression.

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