

# Birth order affects on personality

[Family](#)



Birth Order Affects on Personality has been a controversial topic for a long period of time. There are a large percentage of people who are aware of it but they can not fully identify the meaning. Birth Order refers to the position in the family that a child occupies at the time he or she is born that he or she can be the First-Borns, Middle-Borns, Last-Borns, Only Child, Only Son or anywhere in between (Bartell). Many psychologists have been researched about this topic to get more understanding about Birth Order Affects on Personality and how it does.

Generally, the explorations are about the First-Borns, Middle-Borns and Last-Borns. The purpose of this paper is to discover Effects of Birth Order. This will be achieved by examine and study about Birth Order Affects on Personality, Choice of Career, Parenting Fairness and Sense of Belief in Birth Order. Also this paper progresses to analyse typically how people act upon their position in the family.

With primary research method of surveying, information from expert and personal perspective of writer, this paper will conclude that Birth Order affects on Personality, which has big influence to the workplace environment. The Literature Review With the purpose of state clearly the debate about Birth Order Affects Personality, which has big influence to the workplace environment; there are several secondary resources support information for the Journal Article. Articles and textbooks are main resources that form the basis ideas for this paper, which are written by professional researchers, writers.

The first key author is Frank J. Sulloway, the author of “ Born to Rebel: Birth Order, Family Dynamics and Creative Lives” (1997) who is a Visiting Scholar in the Institute of Personality and Social Research at the University of California, Berkeley. This book addresses the common key issue of Birth Order relating to meaning of first born, middle child, last born, only child or only son and the reason causes personalities of siblings vary is the parents have different treatments to different children in the family.

From these main ideas of the book, it demonstrates clearly purpose of this paper so it is chosen as a secondary research. Dr. Kevin Leman is the second key author, who is a well-known media personality, speaker and columnist. He has wise knowledge about Birth Order that he has published around thirty books about this topic. “ The Birth Order: Why You Are the Way You Are” (2009) presents “ personal testimonials, and descriptions of well-known individuals seen in counselling to illustrate the impact of birth order” (The New Birth Order Book: Why You Are the Way You Are, 2009).

The book also discusses about another main ideas of the Journal Article, which is birth order variables, such as spacing, parental relationships; strengths and weaknesses related to the typical traits of first-borns, only children, middle-born children, and last-born children, which are information on birth order effectively in choice of career and business world. The third key author is quite similar with Dr. Kevin Leman because he is also the most popular writer and speaker on parenting and family matter in Australia.

His name is Michael Grose, who has worked with children all his professional life and has published four books about Birth Order and Parenting. The

typical book about Birth Order is “ Why first-borns rule the world and last-borns want to change it” (2003), which answers the question “ why the children in a family have the same gene, a similar socio-economic environment and experience similar parenting styles have fundamentally different personalities, interests and even different careers”.

In contrast with all first three key authors, Judith Rich Harris is a female writer, who does not believe in Birth Order Affects on Personality. She is a psychologist who received a master’s degree in psychology from Harvard University and has done many researches about Children Life, Personality and Perspective to back up her ideas. “ Why Are Birth Order Effects Dependent on Context? ” (2002) has proven that there is no relation between Birth Order and Personality. Furthermore, she also wrote an article against the book “ Born To Rebel: Birth Order, Family Dynamics and Creative Lives” (1997) written by Frank J. Sulloway.

Birth Order is defined as a chronological order of siblings’ birth in the multiple birth of a family (Birth Order, 2009) Birth Order lets people know how to feel about others’ behaviour, reveals why people do what they do and shows the strategies people use (Clifford) Birth Order helps people to be able to cope with obstacles of the world and discover themselves such as strengths, weaknesses and know what others will act. Children see the world through their Birth Position in the family, which might be lonely, chaotic, scary or rivalrous.

Alfred Adler (1870 - 1937) was a first psychologist pioneer in the research of Birth Order Influenced. His research says that the birth order of a child in the

family significantly affected the child's personality. In late twentieth century and early twenty-first century, the researchers have discovered more effects and contribution to intelligence, career choice and success in adulthood (Janie, 2006) The First-Borns are usually a delight topic for parents and other family members who wait for them to be born and take care of them carefully and have high expectations to them.

First-Borns are usually responsible but have high pressure. The Middle-Borns are "sandwiched in between" that they are born quite late to get privileged favour and quite early to have easy drive from parents. Middle-Borns are more flexible, good at negotiate and have more friends than other siblings. The Last-Borns are babies of family that they have the greatest position in the family and have all the special favors from parents and older siblings. Last-Borns are often outgoing, creative, affectionate and sometimes spoiled.

The Only's have all the special of First-Borns and Last-Borns. However, they are lonely; they have to think ways to avoid the feeling. The Only's are usually responsible, mature faster, get along with people well but selfish. Birth Order Affects on Personality is a controversial issue in psychology. It has been proven by many researchers who have written many articles and textbooks supporting the issue. The purpose of this Journal Article is to claim the connection between Birth Order and Personality that shows who we in life depends upon when we were born.

Moreover, it argues with some other's perception, which they do not believe in Birth Order Affects on Personality. The literature assembled for this paper is primary research method by surveying fifty people to get realistic

information about Birth Order, how many people are aware of it and believe in its effects on Personality and choice of career. Secondary research in qualitative data is found through articles and textbooks composed by expert researchers.

As the topic of Birth Order's Effects is getting more popular - well-known phenomenon in the society, it is necessary to have strong research to comprehend the issue. In sequence to understand the core idea, there are several articles and books given details as exploratory, descriptive and analytical research method. Gaps in research are caused by many psychologists have given different ideas of Birth Order Affects on Personality. Generally, they provide constant opinions but in-depth details are not the same.

It is important to know about the limitations of the research and main objective of this paper because this topic is contentious; the writer will come up the final idea base on her own opinion, knowledge about this area. Public awareness of Birth Order Effects and Belief Birth Order Effects on Personality has been a topic for many psychologists to research for a long period of time. Thus, it has become quite a common public topic of discussion among people. However, there is number of people who are not aware of the topic Birth Order Effects on Personality.

Primary research method has been used that fifty surveys are sent out to collect information of public awareness about this issue. As a result, eighty percent people have heard about this topic and twenty percent of them do not believe in it with variable reasons such as personal experience at home,

point of view, or doing research of reading textbooks, internet or articles. According to the results, more Asian people such as Chinese, Korean and Indonesian tend to not believe in Birth Order Affects on Personality than Western people such as Australian, Germany or Norwegian.

All twenty percent of people who were not aware of this issue do not believe in it even though they have a basic idea about it after doing the survey and the majority of them are first born. A hundred percent of middle born believe in Birth Order and think it is true. Personality is one of main factors, which influence choice of career and people who believe in Birth Order Affects on Personality also believe that Birth Order Affects on their choice of career. This topic is so controversial with different people have different thoughts and perspective.

Judith R. Harris (2002) states that after half of her life of doing research about Birth Order, the conclusion is brought are Birth Order does not have noticeable effect on Personality that its effects are dependent on context. In her opinion, there is no constant rule or relationship between parents to their children for example only child, first born, middle born, last born, or only son, which all depends on the situations. However, from the results of survey, eighty two percent of people believe in the Birth Order and eighty one percent of them have the same reasons, which are personal perspective and experience at home with their own family.

Base on personal experience of the writer, she agrees with Judith R. Harris, the Birth Order does not affect on Personality itself. In different family with different situation, parents have diverse connections with their children.

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There is not because this child is first born or last born, the parents would give all love and care to them and they do not really heed about the middle born. In general, the majority of parents act that way and there are reasonable explanations for that. Birth Order, however, does not have effects on Personality; the way of parenting takes place.

In the article, " Why Are Birth Order Effects Dependent on Context" written by Judith R. Harris (Harris, Why Are Birth Order Effects , 2001) also claims that the Birth Order only affects the way people behave to their siblings and parents but when they are out at the workplace, college or society, they act differently. That proves more clearly about her viewpoint that Birth Order does not affect on Personality; it only does when people are at home with parents and siblings because, at home, they might have to deal with strong, big brother or be responsible to small sister.

Outside the world, they are likely to hang out with people who are same segment of age and they do not really have responsible for anyone.

However, there are a large percentage of people who are aware and believe in Birth Order Affects on Personality with their real experience at home and at work. The world contains diversity types of people also contains different point of view, especially for controversial topic such as Birth Order Effects. Where you are positioned in the family carries a meaning.

The Birth Order affects on Personality, which relates to people's own relational style and working style. Relational style means how people connect to people and working style means how people work and is motivated. The personality is shaped by where people are positioned in the



family. Frank J. Sulloway (1996) states in “Born to Rebel: Birth Order, Family Dynamics and Creative Lives” that First-Borns are more responsible and achievement oriented than Later-Borns. With First-Borns, they may overemphasize the power they have in the family with Later-Borns and become “power-hungry conservatives”.

However, they do have leadership and driver types that they like to manage others. As a result, in the management school where the writer has studied, the majority of students are First-borns. Because parents pay more love, care and attention to First-Borns children as a first child in the family, they are low risk-takers so do not expect them to rock the boat too much. For Second-Borns, Frank J. Sulloway (2002) also claims “Second-Borns try harder than their older siblings because they are always playing catch up.

The Second-Borns “behaves as if he were in a race, is under full steam all the time, and trains continually to surpass his older brother and conquer him””. Furthermore, they are prone to work as teamwork, enjoy working together with people and more cooperative than First-Borns. In more secondary research, Second-Borns are known as a clown of the group, who always hold the group together, help people to get along and entertain friends. Second-Borns act outstanding outside of the world so people can notice them. They were born in a competitive atmosphere so they are really opposite to the First-Borns and Last-Born.

Lauren Rickert (2002) states Second-Borns are afforded the luxury of being able to depose the oldest, at the same time taking control of the youngest. They usually are the black sheep of the family. The Last-Borns children “are

not subjects to dethronement and are said to become lazy and spoiled”, states by Frank J. Sulloway (1996) because they have all support and help from parents and older siblings, they are babies of family and do not have to do anything. However, they have high sense of competitive by feeling “ particular overshadowed by their older siblings.

Therefore, “ when Last-Borns children have competition with older siblings, they are often successful in later life”, argued Adler [ (Sulloway, 1997) ]. On the other hand of laziness, the babies are initiators, ideas people and the challengers. Fortunately, this segment of the society is creative, artistic, living-for-moment life that they can put the humour sense in all the activities. These youngest children always make sure other people are noticed what they have put the efforts on; they persevere to get things started but not finished.

To sum up, this type of children can blow people mind with happy, fun, smile and a bit of annoyed. There are also quiet achievers, finishers (for the Last-Borns), who are the Only's (Only Child, Only Son or Only Daughter). This group contains lonely people of the family, who always hang out alone at home, be selfish but they are independent. The best strength of this group is ability to work for long periods of time by themselves. They tend to not get along to group work, not deal well with conflict but they are good thinkers.

Each personality carries strengths and weaknesses. Depends on different circumstances, people want to put on different types of personality.

Sometimes people need to act like First-Borns for leading or managing but some other times people must act like a Last-Borns for being creative and

having sense of humour. Each person is born with a distinct character and special gift that distinguishes them from every other person in the family tree and society [ (Rayid, 2003) ] and Birth Order of people affects more to their Personality and give them unique qualities.

Birth Order Affects Choice of Career The specific personality brings to people choices of career. More than eighty percent people believe in Birth Order Effects and seventy five percent of them also believe in Birth Order Affects Choice of Career. However, six percent of them think choice of career is made by people's ability based on their personal experience at workplace and point of view. The last four percent people are not sure about the Birth Order Affects on Choice of Career.

The human recourses do not ask applicants about their Birth Order in the family but according to information from Kate Abend, an environmental policy organizer in Washington DC who is in charge of hiring decisions, there are numerous of people talk about status of their Birth Position such as First-Borns, Middle-Borns, Last-Borns, Only Child or Only Son during their job interviews. For example: " I am the oldest so I am really responsible and always making sure things going right. " Or " I am the only child so I tend to do everything myself, I am independent and adventurous. "

Birth Order Affects Choice of Career is a new insight of the Birth Order topic which exposes that First-Borns and Only Child are keener on intellectual careers when Later-Borns and Last-Borns are likely to go for artistic and outdoors-related jobs. First-Borns and Only Child have more care and protection from parents that is reason why they more likely to pursue

intellectual-cognitive careers rather than outdoor careers. Furthermore, parents have high expectations toward First-Borns and Only Child, which they want their core child of the family to have higher education and rigorous intellectual challenges such as medicine or law.

Later-Borns or Last-Borns are the detail enthusiasts and perfectionists, who pay more attention to details of pieces of work and project. Furthermore, Last-Borns are bursting with ideas and creativity; they always come up with special thoughts and love to listen to others. Therefore, they are suited more with architecture or designer careers. Professor Frederick Leong of Ohio State University states " Parents typically place different demands and have different expectations of children depending on their birth order. " Parents who have more children tend to be more relax than the ones have only one child.

They worry their only child choose a career with low education, low income or instability. The Birth Order Affects on Personality but it does not really have matter when choosing a career. With a certain type of personality, people can get a job to match with it but that does not mean they need to fit into any certain categories. There are some Last-Borns, who still reach to highly intellectual positions. The elements are there to show the majority segment of public but the realistic things happen, which are depended on the context with different family has different expectations to different children.