



The Impact of Birth Order on Decision-Making Styles and Confidence: An Exploratory Study

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the influence of birth order on the decision-making styles and general self-efficacy of adults. Grounded in Alfred Adler's birth order theory and contemporary frameworks of cognitive decision-making, the research explores how one's ordinal position within the family is associated with preferred approaches to making decisions and overall confidence levels. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from a purposive sample of 388 adults, with birth order, decision-making styles (rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant, spontaneous), and general self-efficacy measured via validated scales. Findings reveal that firstborns report significantly higher levels of general self-efficacy and a stronger preference for a rational decision-making style, while lastborns show a greater propensity for an intuitive decision-making style. Mediation analysis indicates that self-efficacy partially explains the relationship between birth order (firstborn vs. lastborn) and rational decision-making. The study highlights that birth order functions as a probabilistic factor that shapes confidence, which in turn influences cognitive strategies for decision-making. Implications for organizational behavior, team composition, and personal development include leveraging innate strengths and designing targeted training to build complementary skills across different birth order profiles.

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INTRODUCTION

The structure of the family has long been a subject of interest in understanding individual differences in personality, behavior, and cognitive functioning. Among the various familial factors, birth order—a person's rank by age among their siblings—has provoked sustained theoretical and empirical debate regarding its lasting psychological impact. From Alfred Adler's pioneering work, which posited that firstborns, middle children, lastborns, and only children develop distinct strategies to navigate familial dynamics and secure their place, to contemporary research in personality and organizational psychology, the potential influence of birth order on life outcomes remains a compelling area of inquiry. This study situates itself within this discourse, specifically exploring its implications for two critical domains: decision-making styles and self-confidence.

Decision-making, a fundamental cognitive process integral to personal and professional success, varies significantly across individuals. Some approach decisions methodically and analytically, while others rely on intuition or seek consensus. These styles are not merely habits; they are influenced by a complex interplay of personality traits, experiences, and social learning, much of which originates within the family context. Similarly, an individual's level of confidence—their belief in their own abilities and judgments—is profoundly shaped by early experiences and the roles they adopt within their family system. Firstborns, often thrust into positions of responsibility and mentorship, may develop confidence through leadership and task mastery. Middle children, frequently acting as negotiators and peacemakers, might cultivate a confident reliance on social intuition and compromise. Lastborns, often characterized as risk-takers seeking attention, may develop confidence through charm and persuasion, while only children, accustomed to adult company, might exhibit confidence derived from intellectual engagement.

Despite these plausible connections, the empirical evidence linking birth order to specific decision-making styles and stable confidence levels is fragmented and often contradictory. While some studies suggest that firstborns are more conscientious and achievement-oriented, potentially favoring rational decision-making, others find no significant effects when controlling for variables like socioeconomic status and family size. The relationship between birth order and confidence is equally complex, with theories suggesting differences but research outcomes varying widely. This ambiguity highlights a significant gap in the literature: a lack of

focused, exploratory research that directly investigates *how* individuals from different birth order positions perceive their own decision-making processes and the foundation of their confidence.

Understanding these relationships holds substantial practical relevance. In organizational settings, insights into how birth order might influence team dynamics, leadership selection, and conflict resolution can enhance human resource practices. For individuals, greater self-awareness of their innate decision-making tendencies can lead to more adaptive and effective personal and professional choices. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the nuanced connections between birth order, decision-making styles, and confidence. By investigating these potential linkages, this research aims to contribute to a more sophisticated understanding of how family structure may subtly shape critical cognitive and behavioral patterns that endure into adulthood.

Statement of the Problem

The enduring fascination with birth order and its psychological effects often masks a significant problem: a body of research that is largely inconsistent, theoretically contested, and frequently dismissed as pop psychology. Despite Alfred Adler's foundational theories and a century of subsequent studies, a clear, empirically validated understanding of whether and how birth order shapes fundamental aspects of cognition and behavior, such as decision-making styles and confidence, remains elusive. The academic discourse is polarized, with some meta-analyses concluding that birth order effects are negligible once controlling for key confounds like family size and socioeconomic status, while other studies insist on its persistent, subtle influence on personality development. This ambiguity is particularly problematic in the context of decision-making and confidence—two competencies critical to success in education, career, and personal life. If birth order does indeed cultivate specific tendencies, such as a firstborn's propensity for systematic analysis or a lastborn's comfort with intuitive and risky choices, this knowledge would be invaluable. Organizations could better compose teams and tailor leadership training; educators could adapt pedagogical approaches; and individuals could gain powerful self-awareness to leverage their innate strengths and mitigate their weaknesses. However, the current state of literature offers no such practical guidance. The existing research is fragmented, often examining birth order in isolation or correlating it with broad personality traits (e.g., conscientiousness, openness) without tracing the pathway to specific behavioral outcomes like decision-making.

Furthermore, the cultural context of much of the existing research presents a significant limitation. The majority of studies have been conducted in Western, individualistic societies, and their findings cannot be automatically generalized to other cultural settings where familial structures, parental expectations, and the social significance of sibling roles may differ profoundly. This gap indicates a need for research that is sensitive to these contextual nuances, even within an exploratory framework.

The core problem this study addresses is this critical lack of integration and focus. There is a scarcity of research that simultaneously investigates birth order, decision-making styles (encompassing rational, intuitive, dependent, and avoidant approaches), and self-confidence within a single framework. The existing literature tends to examine these variables in pairs, failing to capture the potential interconnectedness and mediating relationships between them. For instance, does birth order directly influence confidence, which then dictates decision-making style? Or does it directly create a preference for a certain style, the successful application of which then builds confidence?

This study, therefore, seeks to move beyond broad personality correlates and delve into the specific cognitive and behavioral manifestations of birth order. The problem is not merely a lack of studies but a lack of targeted studies that ask *how* birth order might be expressed in the way adults make choices and perceive their own capabilities. By providing a nuanced, exploratory examination of these relationships, this research aims to cut through the existing contradictions and offer a clearer, more structured understanding of a classic psychological question with modern-day relevance.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory study is to investigate the potential relationships between birth order position and the development of distinct decision-making styles and levels of self-confidence in adults. Moving beyond broad personality traits, this research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how an individual's ordinal position within the family may be associated with their preferred approach to making decisions—whether rational, intuitive, dependent, or avoidant—and their fundamental belief in their own judgment and abilities.

Research Objectives

- To examine the influence of birth order position (firstborn, middle child, lastborn, only child) on the preferred decision-making styles of adults.
- To assess the relationship between birth order and the general self-confidence levels of individuals.
- To explore the extent to which self-confidence mediates the relationship between birth order and decision-making style.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in key psychological theories that provide a lens for understanding how early familial roles, as defined by birth order, might shape enduring cognitive and behavioral patterns in adulthood, specifically decision-making styles and confidence. The exploration draws primarily upon Alfred Adler's theory of birth order, contemporary personality frameworks, and theories of cognitive decision-making.

Alfred Adler's pioneering work posits that birth order creates a unique psychological situation for each child, to which they adapt by developing specific strategies and personality styles. According to this view, firstborns, who initially experience undivided attention and later face dethronement by a younger sibling, often develop traits of leadership, responsibility, and a tendency toward conservatism and rule-following. This theoretical background suggests they may develop a preference for systematic, rational decision-making styles and derive confidence from achievement and positional authority. Middle children, theorized to be competitive yet diplomatic, may develop strong social intuition and a preference for dependent or collaborative decision-making, seeking input from others. Their confidence may be linked to social efficacy and negotiation skills. Lastborns, are often characterized as ambitious yet prone to risk-taking to gain attention, may favor quicker, more intuitive or spontaneous decision-making styles. Their confidence may be more externally oriented, rooted in charm and persuasion. Only children, who experience prolonged adult interaction, may develop a mature, analytical approach akin to firstborns, potentially leading to a confident, rational style but with a stronger independent streak.

This study also integrates the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, which provides a bridge between birth order theories and the outcomes of interest. Meta-analytic reviews have attempted to link birth order to traits like conscientiousness (potentially higher in firstborns), openness (potentially higher in laterborns), and neuroticism (potentially higher in middle children). These traits are, in turn, strongly predictive of decision-making preferences; high conscientiousness correlates with methodical and avoidant styles, while high openness correlates with intuitive styles. Furthermore, traits like extraversion and emotional stability (low neuroticism) are key contributors to general self-confidence. Thus, the FFM provides a plausible mechanistic pathway: birth order may influence personality trait development, which then governs decision-making style and confidence levels.

Finally, the study is informed by theoretical models of decision-making styles, such as Scott and Bruce's General Decision-Making Style (GDMS) inventory, which categorizes styles as Rational, Intuitive, Dependent, Avoidant, and Spontaneous. These styles are not merely habits but are considered relatively stable individual differences influenced by personality and experience. The theoretical integration proposed here suggests that the familial environment and the "niche" a child occupies based on their birth order serve as a primary training ground for developing these styles and a corresponding sense of self-efficacy and confidence in one's judgments.

Together, these theories provide a multi-faceted framework for hypothesizing that birth order is not deterministic but probabilistic, creating tendencies that may predispose individuals toward certain cognitive and behavioral patterns that persist into their adult lives, influencing how they make decisions and perceive their own capabilities.

Empirical Review

The empirical literature on birth order presents a complex and often contradictory picture, yet a careful synthesis reveals patterns relevant to decision-making and confidence. Early large-scale studies, such as those by Sulloway (1996), argued that laterborns are more prone to risk-taking and openness to experience—traits aligned with intuitive and spontaneous decision-making—while firstborns were more linked to conscientiousness, suggesting a methodical, rational approach. However, these findings have been heavily contested. The seminal work of Damian & Roberts (2015), using a large, representative sample and controlling for family size and socioeconomic status, found no meaningful personality differences attributable to birth order. This controversy underscores the methodological challenges in the field but does not entirely negate the potential for birth order to influence more specific behavioral outcomes like decision-making styles.

More focused studies provide nuanced insights. Research on leadership and career choice suggests subtle birth order effects. Firstborns are overrepresented in leadership roles and professions requiring methodical analysis (e.g., law, engineering), which implies a comfort with rational decision-making processes (Rohde et al., 2015). Conversely, laterborns have been found to be more prevalent in creative or risky fields (e.g., arts, entrepreneurship), which often require more intuitive and adaptive decision-making styles (Sulloway, 2001; 2010). These trends, while not deterministic, point to a potential correlation between birth order and the development of preferred cognitive strategies for navigating challenges.

The link between birth order and confidence is equally nuanced. Some studies suggest that firstborns and only children, often given greater responsibility and adult interaction, develop higher levels of academic and general self-efficacy early on (Black et al., 2011). This early mastery experience could foster a confident, take-charge attitude that permeates their decision-making. However, other research indicates that laterborns, through their need to negotiate and compete for family resources, may develop higher social confidence and persuasive skills (Paulhus et al., 1999). This suggests that confidence may not be a unitary construct in this context; birth order may influence the *domain* of confidence (e.g., intellectual vs. social) rather than its overall level.

When examining the combined effect on decision-making, the evidence becomes sparser. A study by Leong (2006) found that firstborns exhibited a greater tendency toward need for cognition—a personality variable reflecting a tendency to engage in and enjoy effortful cognitive endeavors—which is a known correlate of the rational decision-making style. Middle children, often characterized as mediators, have been anecdotally linked to a more dependent or collaborative style, seeking social consensus before deciding (Eckstein, 2000). However, robust, direct empirical tests of the relationship between birth order and the full spectrum of decision-making styles, as defined by modern inventories like the GDMS, are notably absent from the literature.

Furthermore, the potential mediating role of confidence is largely unexplored. It is plausible that any influence of birth order on decision-making is not direct but operates through the development of self-confidence. For instance, a firstborn's experience of successfully tutoring a younger sibling may build intellectual confidence, reinforcing a rational style. A lastborn's success in using charm to navigate family conflicts may build social confidence, reinforcing an intuitive or spontaneous style. This mediating pathway represents a significant gap in the current empirical understanding.

The empirical record, therefore, is characterized by intriguing but inconclusive associations. Global personality effects are weak or non-existent when rigorously controlled, yet behavioral correlates in specific domains like career choice suggest persistent, subtle influences. The lack of studies directly investigating the birth order-decision style-confidence triad is the primary gap this study seeks to address. By moving beyond broad personality to specific cognitive and behavioral measures, this research aims to clarify these complex relationships and determine whether birth order provides a meaningful, though probabilistic, lens for understanding adult decision-making and confidence.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to explore the relationships between birth order, decision-making styles, and confidence. A quantitative approach was deemed most appropriate to objectively measure the variables and statistically test the hypothesized relationships across a sufficiently large sample. The design facilitated the identification of patterns and effect sizes, providing a robust foundation for this exploratory investigation.

The target population consisted of adults aged 25-45 who were raised in families with at least two children, ensuring they occupied a defined birth order position (firstborn, middle, lastborn). A purposive sampling strategy was used to recruit participants from professional networks, alumni associations, and community organizations to ensure a sample with diverse professional and educational backgrounds. This approach aimed to capture a wide range of decision-making experiences relevant to both personal and professional contexts. A total of 400 participants were targeted for the study to ensure adequate statistical power for regression and mediation analyses.

Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire hosted on a secure platform (e.g., Qualtrics). The questionnaire comprised four sections:

1. **Demographic Information:** Including age, gender, family size, birth order position, and socioeconomic background.
2. **Birth Order Assessment:** Participants were asked to self-identify their birth order (firstborn, middle child, lastborn) and provide the ages of their siblings for verification.
3. **Decision-Making Style:** Measured using the 25-item General Decision-Making Style (GDMS) inventory by Scott and Bruce (1995). This scale assesses five distinct styles: Rational (e.g., "I make decisions in a logical and systematic way"), Intuitive (e.g., "I rely on my intuition"), Dependent (e.g., "I rarely make important decisions without consulting other people"), Avoidant (e.g., "I avoid making important decisions until the pressure is on"), and Spontaneous (e.g., "I generally make snap decisions"). Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
4. **Confidence:** Assessed using the 10-item General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) by Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1995), which measures a broad and stable sense of personal competence to handle a wide variety of stressful situations (e.g., "I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough"). Responses were recorded on a four-point Likert scale from 1 (not at all true) to 4 (exactly true).

The instruments were selected for their strong psychometric properties and widespread use in psychological research. Permission for use was obtained where required. A pilot study was conducted with 30 individuals to ensure the clarity and reliability of the survey instrument within the context of this study. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all sub-scales in the pilot exceeded 0.70, confirming good internal consistency.

Data analysis was performed using SPSS (Version 28) and the PROCESS macro for mediation analysis. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies) were first computed to summarize the demographic characteristics and the main variables. A series of one-way Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to examine if significant differences existed in decision-making styles and confidence levels across the different birth order groups. Post-hoc tests (Tukey HSD) were used to identify specific group differences where the ANOVA was significant.

To test the hypothesis that confidence (self-efficacy) mediates the relationship between birth order and decision-making styles, a mediation analysis using Model 4 of the PROCESS macro was employed. This analysis used bootstrapping with 5,000 samples to generate confidence intervals for the indirect effect, providing a robust test of the proposed mediating pathway.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data from 388 completed surveys were analyzed (response rate: 97%). The sample was diverse, comprising 55% firstborns, 25% middle children, and 20% lastborns. The mean age was 34.7 years ($SD = 5.8$), and the sample was evenly split by gender (51% female, 49% male). Preliminary analyses confirmed the reliability of all scales, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding .70 for each decision-making sub-scale and the general self-efficacy scale.

Birth Order as a Predictor of Decision-Making Approach

The ANOVA results revealed statistically significant differences based on birth order for two primary decision-making styles: the rational style ($F(2, 385) = 4.12, p < .05$) and the intuitive style ($F(2, 385) = 5.87, p < .01$). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for the rational style was significantly higher for firstborns ($M = 4.15, SD = 0.62$) than for lastborns ($M = 3.82, SD = 0.71$), $p < .05$. The mean score for the intuitive style was significantly higher for lastborns ($M = 3.95, SD = 0.68$) than for both firstborns ($M = 3.60, SD = 0.75$), $p < .01$, and middle children ($M = 3.65, SD = 0.70$), $p < .05$. No significant differences were found for the dependent, avoidant, or spontaneous styles across birth order groups.

Figure 1. Mean Scores for Rational and Intuitive Decision-Making Styles by Birth Order Summary of Key Statistical Findings for Birth Order Differences

Variable / Analysis		Firstborns (n=213) (SD)	Middle Children (n=97) M (SD)	Lastborns (n=78) M (SD)	F- statistic (df)	p- value	Post-hoc (Tukey HSD)	Comparisons
Rational Making	Decision-	4.15 (0.62)	3.98 (0.66)	3.82 (0.71)	$F(2, 385) = 4.12$	.017	Firstborns > Lastborns ($p = .014$)	
Intuitive Making	Decision-	3.60 (0.75)	3.65 (0.70)	3.95 (0.68)	$F(2, 385) = 5.87$	.003	Lastborns > Firstborns ($p = .002$); Lastborns > Middle Children ($p = .024$)	
General Self-Efficacy		3.40 (0.55)	3.21 (0.60)	3.25 (0.58)	$F(2, 385) = 3.45$	.032	Firstborns > Middle Children ($p = .028$); Firstborns > Lastborns ($p = .047$)	

Note. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; df = degrees of freedom.

The Moderating Role of General Self-Efficacy

A one-way ANOVA also identified a significant effect of birth order on general self-efficacy (confidence) ($F(2, 385) = 3.45, p < .05$). Firstborns reported higher levels of general self-efficacy ($M = 3.40, SD = 0.55$) compared to middle children ($M = 3.21, SD = 0.60$) and lastborns ($M = 3.25, SD = 0.58$). This finding suggests that birth order position is associated with the development of overall confidence.

Linking the Pathways: Confidence as a Mediator

To explore the interconnected nature of these findings, a mediation analysis was conducted using Hayes' PROCESS Model 4. The analysis tested whether the relationship between birth order (coded as firstborn vs. lastborn) and the rational decision-making style was mediated by general self-efficacy. The results indicated a significant indirect effect ($\beta = 0.08, SE = 0.03, 95\% CI [0.02, 0.15]$). This suggests that the higher rational decision-making scores observed in firstborns are partially explained by their higher levels of self-efficacy. In other words, a portion of a firstborn's tendency toward a systematic, logical approach to decisions can be attributed to their greater general confidence in their abilities.

Table 1. Mediation Analysis: The Indirect Effect of Birth Order (Firstborn vs. Lastborn) on Rational Decision-Making through Self-Efficacy

Path	β Coefficient	Standard Error	t- value	p- value	95% Interval	Confidence
Total Effect (c): Birth Order → Rational DM	0.33	0.11	3.00	.003	[0.11, 0.55]	
Direct Effect (c'): Birth Order → Rational DM (controlling for mediator)	0.25	0.10	2.50	.013	[0.05, 0.45]	
Indirect Effect (a*b): Birth Order → Self-Efficacy → Rational DM	0.08	0.03	-	-	[0.02, 0.15]	

Note. DM = Decision-Making. The indirect effect was tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 samples. The confidence interval that does not include zero indicates a significant mediation effect.

Integrating the Themes

Taken together, the results provide empirical support for a nuanced relationship between birth order, confidence, and decision-making. Firstborns tend to exhibit higher general self-efficacy, which is in turn associated with a greater preference for a rational, analytical decision-making style. Lastborns, while not differing in overall confidence from middle children, show a distinct preference for intuitive decision-making, relying less on systematic analysis and more on gut feeling. These findings point to birth order not as a deterministic factor, but as one that creates probabilistic tendencies for developing certain cognitive and behavioral patterns, with confidence acting as a key mechanism in this process.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings of this study provide nuanced insights into the long-debated influence of birth order on adult psychology, specifically illuminating its relationship with decision-making styles and confidence. The results offer partial support for Adlerian theories and contemporary personality research while introducing critical nuances that advance our understanding of how early familial roles may translate into cognitive-behavioral tendencies.

The study confirms a significant association between birth order and preferred decision-making strategies. The tendency for firstborns to score higher on the rational decision-making style aligns with Adler's characterization of them as conscientious, responsible, and rule-oriented individuals who value structure and systematic processes. This finding is also consistent with their overrepresentation in professions requiring methodical analysis. Conversely, the propensity for lastborns to favor an intuitive decision-making style supports the theory that laterborns, often engaging in risk-taking to carve a niche within the family, develop a greater comfort with rapid, heuristic-based processing and trusting their gut feelings. This style may be an adaptive strategy in environments where agility and persuasion are more valuable than meticulous analysis. The lack of significant findings for the middle children on any specific style suggests their adaptation may be more context-dependent and fluid, aligning with their theorized role as flexible negotiators rather than adherents to a single, dominant style.

Furthermore, the results reinforce the role of general self-efficacy (confidence) as a key psychological resource that varies by birth order. The higher confidence levels observed among firstborns can be theoretically linked to their early experiences of responsibility, task mastery, and often undivided parental attention, which foster a strong belief in their capabilities. This finding provides a plausible mechanism for their achievement-oriented and leadership tendencies. That middle children and lastborns reported lower confidence levels suggests that their strategies for gaining recognition—through social negotiation or charm—may not build the same generalized sense of efficacy as the mastery experiences typically available to firstborns.

The most significant contribution of this study is the empirical demonstration that confidence acts as a mediating variable. The mediation analysis revealed that the higher rational decision-making scores of firstborns are partially explained by their higher levels of self-efficacy. This moves beyond simple correlation to suggest a psychological pathway: the birth order position provides differential opportunities for building confidence, which in turn shapes how an individual prefers to approach decisions. A firstborn's confidence, built through early mastery, empowers them to engage in and trust more effortful, analytical processing. This finding elegantly integrates Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the role of self-belief in goal-directed behavior, with birth order theory.

However, it is crucial to interpret these findings within their limitations. The effects, while statistically significant, are modest. Birth order is not deterministic but rather one probabilistic factor among many—including genetics, parenting style, and socioeconomic status—that shape personality and behavior. The cross-sectional design also prevents causal inferences. While the theory suggests birth order influences confidence and decision-making, it is possible that other underlying factors contribute to all three.

Despite these limitations, the implications of this study are meaningful. In organizational contexts, these insights can enhance team composition and leadership development. Understanding that a team of firstborns might naturally gravitate toward data-driven, systematic decision-making, while a team with more lastborns might excel in brainstorming and adaptive, intuitive tasks, can help

managers play to their teams' innate strengths. For career counseling and personal development, individuals can gain valuable self-awareness. A lastborn recognizing their intuitive leanings might seek roles in marketing or entrepreneurship, while a firstborn might be steered toward project management or analytics, with both encouraged to develop skills that complement their natural style.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that birth order retains a subtle but significant relationship with key adult competencies. It is not that birth order directly creates a personality, but that it helps shape early experiences that build confidence, which subsequently influences how we prefer to make sense of the world and make our choices. It reaffirms that our family position is one of the foundational layers upon which our cognitive and behavioral patterns are built.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study set out to investigate the impact of birth order on the decision-making styles and confidence levels of adults. The findings confirm that birth order position is a significant, though modest, factor associated with distinct cognitive-behavioral patterns. Specifically, firstborns demonstrated a greater propensity for a rational decision-making style and reported higher levels of general self-efficacy, while lastborns showed a stronger preference for an intuitive decision-making approach. Crucially, the research identified that self-efficacy acts as a key psychological mechanism, partially mediating the relationship between birth order (firstborn vs. lastborn) and a rational decision-making style. This suggests that the confidence built through early familial roles and experiences is a critical pathway through which birth order influences how adults approach decisions.

These results provide empirical weight to Adlerian theories while moving beyond broad personality traits to pinpoint specific cognitive processes affected by sibling dynamics. The study underscores that birth order should not be viewed as deterministic but as a probabilistic influence that interacts with other factors to shape behavioral tendencies. The implications extend to personal self-awareness, team dynamics in organizational settings, and practices in career counseling, highlighting the value of understanding the deep-seated origins of our decision-making preferences and confidence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Integrate Birth Order Awareness in Talent Management:** Organizations should consider incorporating an understanding of team composition and innate decision-making strengths into talent management and team-building exercises. Forming teams with a balance of rational and intuitive decision-makers can lead to more comprehensive problem-solving and innovation.
2. **Tailor Leadership and Training Programs:** Leadership development programs can be enhanced by acknowledging different leadership and decision-making styles. Training for individuals with strong rational tendencies (often firstborns) could focus on developing intuitive leaps and adaptive thinking, while training for those with intuitive styles (often lastborns) could strengthen strategic planning and analytical skills.
3. **Promote Confidence-Building Initiatives:** Since self-efficacy is a powerful mediator, organizations and educational institutions should prioritize initiatives that build general confidence across all employees and students. This can be achieved through mentorship programs, opportunities for mastery experiences, and constructive feedback systems that reinforce a sense of competence.
4. **Apply Findings in Career Counseling:** Career counselors and coaches can use these insights to help clients understand their natural decision-making inclinations. This self-awareness can guide individuals toward careers and roles that are a better fit for their innate styles, thereby increasing job satisfaction and performance.

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