

Abstract

In this study, the relationship between parents' differential affection and adolescents' well-being (in terms of depression, anxiety, self-worth and competence) as well as sibling relationships (in terms of sibling warmth, power and conflict) were investigated. The subjects included 354 first-born and last-born Chinese students (ranged in age 13 to 17 years) in Hong Kong. Questionnaires were administered and subjects were requested to compare their experiences with one of their siblings (average age 14.09 years). It was found that mothers' and fathers' differential affections were related. Most adolescents perceived their families in congruent pattern in which both parents display equal affection or preferential affection to the same child. Consistent with past research, equal treatment by both parents showed the most positive correlates compared with differential treatment. Specifically, the "favoured" adolescents tended to have a better well-being but more negative sibling relationship than "disfavoured" adolescents. Moreover, strong connection between sibling status and sibling power was found.