

My hypothesis for this project was that adolescents (middle-late) who have siblings, regardless of how many, would adopt the competing or collaborating approach when managing conflict. The reason I thought this was because adolescents usually live in a household with parental bosses to which they have to be accountable. For example, you scratch my back I'll scratch yours (collaborating) or to seek reward or avoid punishment (competing). After careful consideration, I finally narrowed it down to focusing on conflict between family and siblings and then finally getting to my main purpose of approaches to conflict and their preference with siblings.

The intended audience for this podcast is adolescents with siblings and researchers. The podcast's purpose is to show them that there are different ways to manage conflict. To clarify, the middle to late stages of adolescence which would be the ages ranging from 15-21. The reason why researchers are also the intended audience is in the hopes that the information I found can show there needs to be more research done on the overall topic of conflict management approaches used in families. I plan to distribute this podcast through social media by posting about it on my Snapchat along with YouTube and other platforms to make sure the podcast is accessible to people. Hopefully, the small amount of information that I gathered can help further research on conflict approaches that adolescents use where there are siblings in the family, or at least it could spark more conversation about the topic.

The first piece of research that my project draws is from an academic article written by Jennifer L. Bevan, and the findings got me thinking and had me asking a question: Do kids use the same approaches to conflict management as their parents? This was another thing I included in my project as I asked my interviewees to identify what approach to conflict management their

parents used so that I could compare it to the one they use to answer this question. Another point of research that my project draws from was an academic article written by Mary Lee Hummert. Sadly, this article seems to just be a starting point so that more research could be done; however, it made me wonder if people who had various ages of parents or siblings would have a dramatic change in the approach they used to manage conflict (Hummert, 2007). Therefore in my project, I made sure not to just interview teens; I changed my intended audience to adolescents in the mid-to-late section which would be kids ranging from 15 years old all the way to 21 years old. This helped me solidify my hypothesis due to the fact that our parents shape who we are whether we like it or not. The last piece of research that my project drew on was an academic article titled “Analyzing College Students from Divorced and Intact Families and Their Communication Patterns and Interpersonal Communication Motives.” This academic article prompted me not to stereotype people. Along with reminding me that every family is different, some siblings have half-siblings or step-siblings who didn't grow up with them so they had time to develop one of the approaches to conflict management without having to deal with another sibling. Another reason why I wanted to include this article in my project is due to the fact that growing up I knew many people who had divorced parents, and the information I had experienced personally went against the information that was found in this academic article (Punyanunt-Carter et al., 2019). I wanted to see if my results would go in agreement with what this academic article found for its results or if my results would indicate the personal experiences I have had. Finally, I used the description of the five approaches to conflict management which was discovered by Kenneth W. Thomas and Ralph H. Kilmann (Thomas & Kilmann, 2008).

I produced this project digitally by using Zoom, iMovie, and a few other editing programs. The reason why I chose to display my information in a podcast was due to the fact that

with my target audience it seemed to make sense, as there is no way I could put all the information I needed on a pamphlet. Also putting the information on a website seems to detract from adolescents viewing it as they are always on their phone, so a podcast made the most sense. After looking at the research my project drew on, I came up with seven questions for my interviewees. For the sixth question, I showed them the five conflict-handling modes created by Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann. By providing them these options it allows me to receive an explicit definition of which one they use. If I just asked them to describe how they managed conflict, they might fall under many categories which might hinder my results. After completing all the interviews, I opened up an Excel sheet and reported all the information by re-watching all the interviews to make sure I did not omit any details. After all the information was placed in an Excel sheet, I was fit to create graphs and pie charts to digest the responses and see if my hypothesis was proven correct or invalid. With all the information in an easy-to-digest form, I opened up iMovie and got to work on editing my podcast. After I had everything edited to the way I wanted, I filmed the podcast. Once that was all done, I added some background music thanks to two artists who allowed me to use their music and sent it off to YouTube so that way I could present it to the class and others could see my findings.

According to the responses of the interviewees, they classified them into the bar graph as follows; I used question four to check the validity of their self's rate alignment to one or two of the five approaches to conflict management. With one sibling the approaches that were used were mixed with compromising and avoiding being the more frequent responses. With two siblings, not surprisingly, there was an increase in the number of approaches used; however, the compromising approach was more predominantly enacted. With three siblings the dynamic changed completely with only compromising and accommodating approaches utilized. With four

siblings, the avoidance and the collaborating approach resurfaced. And finally, with seven siblings the conflict management was middle ground including only collaborating and accommodating approaches. Since my hypothesis was based on parental influence/control, I also wanted to determine if managing conflict might be a learned response. Perhaps they used the same conflict responses as one of their parents. My hypothesis was proved invalid because the results proved the only time that both competing and collaborative approaches were embraced was when the subject had two siblings, and even then the predominant approach in this group was compromising. Each of my respondents answered question 6 to test this in case my hypothesis failed. One of the responses that surprised me was the response to the last question that I asked my interviewees, as when I asked them to respond to question four most responded with an altercation that might spark violence which is seen as a negative event. The pie chart shown in the appendix of my paper shows the responses to the final question I asked my interviewees.

Even though my hypothesis was proven invalid, I still believe I achieved my purpose. My project will hopefully enlighten and intrigue people. Hopefully, it will get other people curious about conflict management along with conflict communication. I hope that if a researcher sees my project they could be inspired to look further into this and possibly do their own surveys or experiments to get more information out there. Even one of the academic articles I found by Hummert, M. L stated that there needs to be more studies done to provide more information on the development of family communication with aging family members so that we can advance family communication (Hummert, 2007). Hopefully, this can spark some interest in the topic and make people more aware that more research needs to be done.

## Citations

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### Question for the interwevies

1. Name, age
2. How many siblings do they have?
3. Describe yourself In two- three sentences
4. How would you describe conflict?
5. How was conflict dealt with in your house when you were growing up?
6. Out of the 5 **approaches to conflict management, which one do you use?**
  - a. What type do your parents use?
7. How do you view conflict

### How the interwevies viewed conflict

