

POSTER

**ESTABLISHMENT OF FRIENDSHIPS AMONG BRAZILIAN TWIN CHILDREN: DIFFERENCES AS A FUNCTION OF SEX AND DEPENDENCE**

**Rafael R. de Albuquerque\***, Lara E. da Silva, Lilian C. Luchesi, Isabella F. Ferreira, Tania K. Lucci, Emma Otta

Universidade de Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil

\*[rafael\\_ricciardi@usp.br](mailto:rafael_ricciardi@usp.br)

**ABSTRACT**

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Twin children are commonly raised with the full-time company of a same-age peer, their co-twin. This peculiarity is also present in the establishment of friendships, since co-twins usually share the same environments (e.g. school). It has been hypothesized that the twin situation could result in a dependency on the co-twin, thereby leading to difficulties in forming new relationships beyond relatives. Additionally, it was hypothesized that the presence of an opposite-sex co-twin in dizygotic pairs could increase the proportion of opposite sex friends the child has. We aimed to test these hypotheses in a sample of 60 Brazilian twin children - 28 monozygotic (MZ), 20 dizygotic of same-sex (DZss), 12 dizygotic of opposite-sex (DZos) - aged 8-14. Dependency and zygosity were assessed using, respectively, the validated versions of the Twin Relationship Questionnaire and the Zygosity Questionnaire, both completed by children's parents. To assess the number and sex of friends, a Pictorial Representation of Friendships was administered to the children. A negative correlation was found between an individual's number of friends and their dependence on their co-twin ( $r = -0.321$ ;  $p = 0.012$ ). We did not find any difference between the proportion of friends of the opposite sex among male DZss and DZos children or between female DZss and DZos children, as determined by an Independent Samples Kruskal-Wallis test. Our data suggest that the establishment of friendships is influenced by co-twin dependence. Also, the sex composition within twin pairs has no effect on the sex proportion of each child's friends.