

POSTER

RIVALRY AND CONFLICT IN TWIN RELATIONSHIPS: IMPACTS ON FRIENDSHIP NETWORKS

Lara Espindola da Silva*, Emma Otta, Lilian Luchesi, Isabella Ferreira, Rafael de Albuquerque, Tania Lucci

Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

[*laraespindola@usp.br](mailto:laraespindola@usp.br)

ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate how relational dynamics — specifically rivalry and conflict — between twin children influence the structure of their friendship networks, using a social network theory framework. Twins, by nature, share the same age and typically navigate similar social environments with sustained interaction. These shared conditions can promote strong emotional bonds, but they can also heighten interpersonal tension. Early childhood dependency on caregivers may lay the groundwork for competition over parental attention and resources. Rather than focusing exclusively on individual characteristics, the social network approach emphasizes the structure and composition of relationships through metrics, such as network density or betweenness centrality. The friendship networks of 60 twin pairs aged 7 to 14 years [26 monozygotic (MZ), 22 same-sex dizygotic (DZss) and 12 opposite-sex dizygotic (DZos) twins] were analyzed using the Pictorial Representation of Friendships (PRF) and the Twin Relationship Questionnaire, which assesses five dimensions of relationship – rivalry, conflict, dependence, closeness, and dominance. Preliminary findings indicate that higher levels of parent-reported conflict and rivalry were associated with increased interpersonal distance between twins, as reflected in their positioning within each other's PRF. In contrast, no significant correlations were found between the other relationship dimensions and the structural properties of the twin's social networks. Data collection is ongoing, and the sample is expected to expand. This study is part of the FAPESP thematic project “USP Twin Panel” and is funded by CNPq.