Balance in the sibling-mother-sibling triad
Interdependence in family relationship quality, contact, and conflict
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Based on assumptions of family systems theory and the solidarity perspective we study triads between two siblings and their mother to test enforcement and compensation mechanisms, as well as a loyalty conflict hypothesis based on balance theory (Heider, 1958).

The Netherlands Kinship Panel Study (NKPS):
- First wave (collected in 2002-2004)
- 907 triads
- Relationship quality, contact, and conflict

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship quality between siblings</th>
<th>Contact between siblings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sibling 1 – Sibling 2</td>
<td>Sibling 2 – Sibling 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+++</td>
<td>+++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.538*</td>
<td>.178*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.186*</td>
<td>.428*</td>
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</tbody>
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The number of plusses represent the size of the effect. Controlled for fam. background, age, gender, education.

Multi-level analysis (sibling relationships nested in families)
- Y = mutual sibling relationship (2 ego - alter relationships)
- X = sibling - mother relationship (ego - mother & alter - mother)
- Balance tested with interaction (EM x AM)

Conclusion

- Relationship quality, contact, and conflict: enforcement
- Relationship quality and contact: balance in addition to enforcement
- Discrepant intergenerational relationships temper the strength of the sibling relationship

Future research

- Project family ties after parental divorce
  - Longitudinal complete kinship network data
  - Co-evolution of the kinship network and family members' well-being