

## A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON AGGRESSION BETWEEN BOYS AND GIRLS ADOLESCENT

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this study was to compare the Aggression in boys with girls. A group of 100 adolescents (50 boys & 50 girls), aged 14 – 16 years recruited to participate in the study. The data were collected using Aggression Scale by Mathur and Bhatnagar (2004). To test the hypothesis ‘t’ test was calculated. Result showed that there was a significant differences between boys and girls on aggression ( $t = 2.21$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). On the t-test, the two groups differed significantly on their aggression. Boys were more aggressive than girls.*

*Key words: Aggression, Adolescent and Psychology.*

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### INTRODUCTION:

In psychology, the term aggression refers to a range of behaviors that can result in both physical and psychological harm to oneself, other or objects in the environment. The expression of aggression can occur in a number of ways, including verbally, mentally and physically. Aggression has various meanings; we will define human aggression as behavior whose intent is the physical or psychological injury or another person. Aggression as psychological phenomenon stems from deliberate intention of harming another person. It is an action, which is visible in overt behaviour. It is, therefore, clear that aggression is constituted of three elements. These are intention, action tendency and actual harm committed to another person (Berkowitz 1981). Aggression refers to any behavior that is hostile, destructive, and/or violent. Generally, aggressive behavior has the potential to inflict injury or damage to the target person or object. Examples of aggressive behavior include physical assault, throwing objects, property destruction, self-harming behaviors, and verbal threats.

Aggression can be either physical or verbal, and behavior is classified as aggression even if it does not actually succeed in causing harm or pain. Aggression is not the same thing as assertiveness. Aggression is a perplexing phenomenon. Aggression is viewed as a form of

behavior, not as an emotion, a motive, or an attitude. The term aggression often has been applied to negative emotions such as anger, to motives such as the desire to harm or injure others, and even to negative attitudes such as racial or ethnic prejudice. While all of these factors certainly play an important role in the occurrence of behavior that causes harm, their presence is not a necessary condition for the performance of such actions. Either is it essential that aggression hate or even dislike the persons they attack. Many people inflict harm upon persons toward whom they hold positive rather than negative attitudes. In view of the fact that negative emotions, motives, and attitudes may or may not accompany direct assaults against others, we will restrict the use of the term aggression to overt harm doing behavior and consider other factors separately. Peterson and Brown (1994) observed that tens of thousands of children are treated medically for what are termed "unintended injuries" and recent findings suggest that many of these injuries are actually the results of abuse by parents or other adults. Aggression has been defined (Loeber & Hay, 1997) as 'a category of behaviour that causes or threatens physical harm to others'. We have note that 'aggression' as generally used is not a unitary term but encompasses a variety of behaviours, including verbal aggression, bullying, physical fighting, robbery, rape and homicide. Cognitive deficits have been associated with aggressive behaviour and these are substantially heritable (Taylor, Sandberg, Thorley, & Giles, 1991; Taylor, 1994). There is also reason to believe that temperamental predispositions to anti-social behaviour are moderately to highly heritable (Lahey, Waldman & McBurnett, 1999). Youths who engage in high levels of antisocial behaviour are much more likely than other youths to have a biological parent who also engages in chronic antisocial behaviour (Farrington, 1995; Lahey, Hartdagen, Frick, McBurnett, Conner & Hynd, 1988). This evidence underlines the truth of the statement that 'young children with the highest degree of temperamental and cognitive predisposition (to aggression and antisocial behaviour generally) are usually raised in families that are ill-prepared to provide childrearing that could prevent the development of antisocial behaviour' (Lahey, Waldman & McBurnett, 1999).

Children from homes where domestic violence is occurring are also more likely to exhibit aggressive behaviour (Farrington-Cohen and Rosenbaum 1985; Hughes 1988; Jaffe, Wolfe, Wilson & Zak 1986; Mathias, Mertin & Murray 1995; Mertin & Mathias 1991; Sternberg, Lam,

Greenbaum, Cichetti, Dawud, Cortes, Krispin & Lorey 1993). The effect of sociodemographic variables such as poverty and unemployment is mediated through, and has its effects on, parent-child interactions through causing increasing levels of parental stress. This in turn impairs the quality of parenting and lowers the threshold of parental reaction to child misbehaviour. Earlier-onset aggressive children are often friends of other oppositional, aggressive children (Cairns & Cairns, 1994; Tremblay, Masse, Vitaro, & Dobkin, 1995). The influence of delinquent peers on later-onset (*adolescence-limited*) antisocial behaviour appears to be much stronger.

According to social psychologists gender differences in aggression are due to the following two major factors:-

- ❖ **Social Role:** - According to Eagly (1987) men are more aggressive because society accepts them to be more assertive and aggressive. On the other hand women are expected to be more nurturing, more emotional and more concerned for the well being of others than males.
- ❖ **Biological (Genetic and Hormonal) Factors:-** There is some research evidence to show that biological factors also play an important role in causing gender differences in aggression. One important biological difference in aggression is the level of testosterone. It has been found that among males, the higher the levels of testosterone the higher the level of aggression. (Olweus, 1986).

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

There is considerable evidence that boys are disproportionately represented among seriously aggressive children and young people. From about four years of age onwards, boys are more likely than girls to engage in both aggressive and nonaggressive antisocial behavior (Lahey, Schwab-Stone, Goodman, Rathouz, Miller, Canino, Bird, Jensen & Waldman, 1998; Coie & Dodge, 1997; Tremblay, Boulerice, Harden McDuff, Perusse, Pihl & Zoccolillo, 1996). Young men are more likely to commit crime than young women (Rutter, Giller & Hagell, 1998). Average aggressiveness ratings are higher for boys at all ages (Lahey, Waldman & McBurnett, 1999). Crick (1996) and Crick and Grotpeter (1995) it is argued that much aggression in girls has been overlooked because it is in a different form from that of boys. Girls are more likely to use

‘relational aggression’, that is, verbal and indirect aggression, such as, alienation, ostracism, character defamation and gossip. Lanctot and LeBlanc (2003) conducted the Gender and Aggression Project in Canadian Institutes for Health Research and reported that gender difference in aggression have several forms. Crick (1996) theorized that different aggressive tactics were linked to different social motives, and that the importance of these motives differed for girls and for boys. Because boys emphasize dominance whereas girls emphasize intimacy, the genders presumably diverge in the development of aggressive tactics (Block, 1983; Crick, 1996). Biswas, (1989) stated that Indian male adolescents have been found to be more extra-aggressive than females.

#### HYPOTHESIS

The aggression of boys and girls school student differs significantly.

#### SAMPLE

The sample of the proposed study will be selected from the different schools of Ranchi town. There were 50 boys and 50 girls respondents ranging age – group 14 to 16 years studying in class IX<sup>th</sup> and X<sup>th</sup>. All of these belong to middle socio-economic status.

#### INSTRUMENT

Aggression scale :-Aggression scale developed by Mathur and Bhatnagar (2004) was used to study the level of aggression of the subjects. This scale consists of 55 statements. It is a Likert type 5 point scale. The total number of answers constitutes the final score. Maximum score is 275 and minimum is 55. Higher scores show higher aggression level and lower scores show lower aggression level. Test-retest reliability of the checklist was found to be .88 in males and .81 in females. Validity is .80 in males and .78 in females.

#### PROCEDURE:

The aggression scale was administered to both groups with instructions to complete all questions honestly and not to discuss the questions with fellow students. Scoring was done according to the respective scoring keys. In order to fulfill the hypothesis of the study the score obtained were analyzed with mean scores, standard deviation and t values.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

Table –1

Mean scores, SD's and "t" value of the boy and girl groups on aggression scale.

Groups	N	Mean	SDs	SEM	Md	t	P Value
Boys	50	208.8	26.71	3.77	10.89	2.21	0.05
Girls	50	197.91	22.48	3.17			

Comparison of aggression between the adolescents attending boys and girls revealed that the mean values for the boys 208.8 was higher than girls 197.91. The standard deviations were 26.71 and 22.48 respectively. t value was significant at 0.01 level. Data showed that the boys were more aggressive than their girl's counterpart. Hence, the hypothesis was accepted. The findings about gender differences are in line with those of the studies by Eagly (1987), Biswas (1989) and Rutter, Giller & Hagell, (1998). So it can be stated that boys were found more aggressive than girls.

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