

Be Wide Awake: Aggressiveness on Children

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Abstract

Background of the Study: Aggression is one of the most prevalent behavioral aspects in children which cause a lot of concern in present days. Reactively aggressive children do not seek to meet goals through aggressive behavior. Instead they react negatively to perceived or actual threats and are easily irritated.

Objective: The study examines the aggressive behavior among school children attending higher primary school in selected village, Mangalore.

Methods: A non-experimental descriptive design was chosen to assess the aggressive behavior among children by using a Modified Overt Aggression Scale and total of 60 samples were selected using the Snowball sampling technique.

Results: The findings clearly revealed that 48 subjects (80%) were having mild aggressive behavior. With regard to the association of demographic variables, religion, birth order, occupational status of parents, family income and parents opinion regarding aggressive behavior had statistically significant association with the aggressive behavior among children attending higher primary school at $p < 0.05$ level.

Conclusion: The study infers that adolescents have considerable level of aggressive behavior. It is important to indicate that aggression is a problem which continues through the adolescents and adulthood and hence it is just not a problem at that point of time.

Keywords: Aggressive behavior; Children, Higher primary school, Modified overt aggression scale, Snowball sampling.

Introduction

Sigmund Freud states that the tendency of aggression is an innate, independent, instinctive disposition in man. It constitutes the most powerful obstacle to culture. Most of the young children will be naughty and impulsive in

nature; it is naturally normal. However some children have extremely difficult and challenging behavior that are outside the norm for their age. The common aggressive behaviors seen in children are physical aggression, verbal aggression, aggressive against property, auto aggression. The belief that aggression is more of a problem of the industrialized nations is falling short of space as the developing ones catching up with them. Aggression not only spoils school environment but also is a risk factor for future delinquency.

Aggression refers to behavior between members of the same species that is intended to cause humiliation, pain or harm, antisocial behavior, depression, anxiety, dissociation and other trauma related symptoms as well

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as problems in emotion regulation.

Aggression during early childhood is not taken seriously and is often considered as a part of growing. It can be conceptualized as a personality trait. In other words aggression can be inherited to the individual. It is a symptom with or without intension or adaptive function, which reflect a behavioral pattern that can be attributed to a syndrome.

Over the past 50 years, rate of maladaptive aggression and antisocial behavior have increased in frequency and severity among children and adolescents within the world. Victimization rates for murder and non-negligent manslaughter rise with age during the developing years. When 21 years trend are compared, children but 13 years old have risk of violence about 2 per 10000 children ².

WHO(2020) has reported that youth violence has taken a stride among 10-29 years old and peaks during late adolescence and early adulthood. It covers a number of acts ranging from intimidation and physical combat to severe sexual and physical attack on murder. Worldwide, between young people aged 10 and 29, some 200 000 homicides happen annually, which is 42% of total homicides worldwide each year. The fourth leading cause of death in persons aged 10-29 is homicide, 84% of which involve men.¹⁰

Many studies shown that the prevalence of aggressive behavior among children are increasing day by day. A cross-sectional study (2014) conducted in North Karnataka among 347 students had showed that 69.5% of children were physically aggressive and 71.5% were verbally aggressive⁶. The data collected from rural area of West Bengal pointed out that 66.55% of the children were physically aggressive and among them 75.8% were boys and 58.2% girls.

Another study among 402 secondary school students in South Nigeria pointed out that 69.9% students had antisocial behavior and among them 77.7% were males and 62.2% were females⁵. Bettina.F.Piko(2006) findings suggested that aggression was an important predictor of children's psychosomatic health, self-perceived health

and health behaviors. In boys, physical aggression was a predictor of substance use and other health behaviors, whereas in girls anger was the most important influencing factor of psychosocial health⁸.

Aggression has become one of the common problems seen in the children of present generation. Nearly three-quarters of children are showing aggressive behavior. Hence, investigators conducted this study among higher primary school children in order to identify the level of aggressive behavior among them.

Statement of the Problem

A study to assess the aggressive behavior among children attending higher primary school in selected village, Mangalore.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the aggressive behavior among children attending higher primary school.
- To find out the association between aggressive behavior among children with selected socio-demographic variables like age, religion, sex, birth order, education, occupation, family income, type of family.

Materials & Methods

A non-experimental descriptive design was adopted for this study and sixty samples were selected based on snowball sampling method of those who fulfilled the inclusive criteria such as age group of 9-16 years and who were willing to participate in the study. The purpose of the study was explained to samples and a formal informed consent was obtained from them.

After recruiting the participants for the study, data was collected from the subjects using the Modified overt aggression rating scale.

Instruments used:

- Part I: Demographic variables such as age, sex, religion, occupation of parents, education of parents, family income, type of family, birth order of the child.
- Part II: Modified Overt Aggression Rating Scale.

It consist of total 20 items under 4 sections- Verbal aggression, Physical aggression, Aggression against property and Auto aggression. A score of ‘0’ mark will be given for the answer “NEVER”, Score of ‘1’ will be given for the answer “RARELY”, a score of ‘2’ will be given for the answer “SOMETIMES” and a score of ‘3’ will be given for the answer “OFTENTLY”.

Scoring Interpretation:

Score	Level of aggression
0-15	No aggressive behavior
16-30	Mild aggressive behavior
31-45	Moderate aggressive behavior
46-60	Severe aggressive behavior

The duration of data collection was 10 minutes for each participant. On the completion was data collection, in view of improving positive behavior among samples, a health education pamphlet regarding tips to reduce aggression was distributed. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive & inferential statistics.

Results

Description of demographic variables

The analysis of demographic variables showed that among the children attending higher primary school, 40(66.7%) within the age group of 9-12 years, with equal number of 30(50%)males and 30(50%) females and majority 50(83.3%) were Muslims. With regards of the birth order 22(36.7%) for both second and third order. Majority 44(73.3%) fathers and 50(83.3%) mothers were having primary education. Half of samples fathers’ 30(50%) were doing private job and 38(63.3%) of mothers were homemakers. 26(43.3%) had a family monthly income of less than Rs.10,000/-to Rs.15, 000/- and 28(46.7%) from nuclear family. More than half of samples parents responded that 34(56.7%) children were having aggressive behavior

Assessment of level of aggressive behavior among higher primary school children

The study results recorded that (*figure 1*) majority 48(80%) higher primary school children had mild level of aggression, 4(6.7%) had moderate level of aggression and 8(13.3%) did not have aggressive behavior.

The mean score of verbal aggression was 39±2.68, physical aggression 39±5.54, aggression against property 31.4± 16.89 and auto aggression 24.6±20.15. (*table 1*)

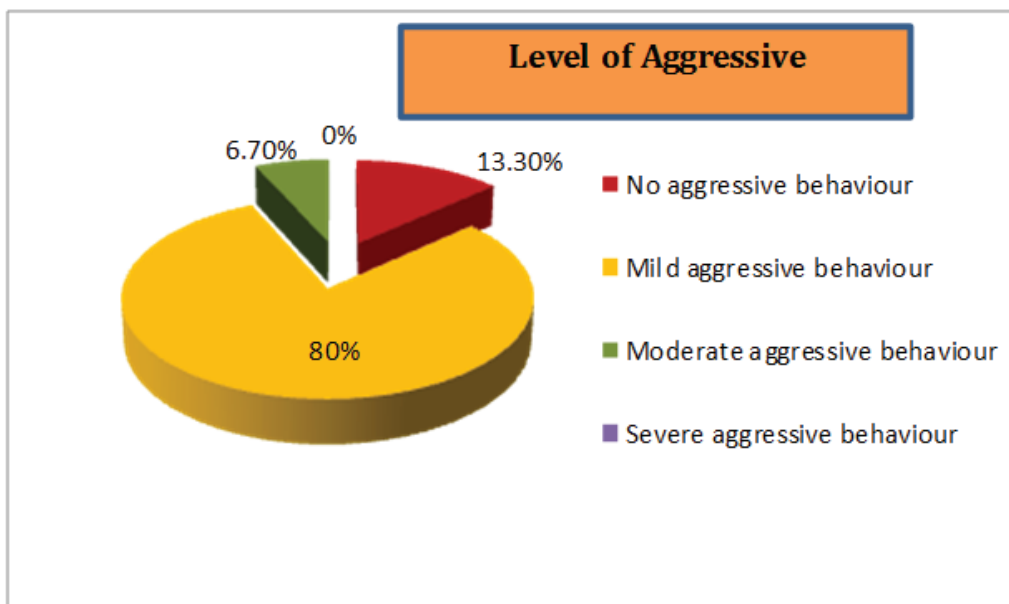


Figure 1: Percentage distribution of level of aggressive behavior among higher primary school children

Table 1: Area wise distributions of mean percentage score and standard deviation of aggressive behavior.

Behavior	Mean	Standard Deviation
Verbal aggression	39	2.68
Physical aggression	39	5.54
Aggression against property	31.4	16.89
Auto aggression	24.6	20.15

Association of level of aggressive behavior with selected demographic variables

With regard to the association of demographic variables, religion, birth order, occupational status of parents, family income and parents opinion regarding aggressive behavior had statistically significant association with the aggressive behavior among children attending higher primary school at $p < 0.05$ level.

Discussion

With reference to table :1 , **Oana Mitrofan et al (2014)** collected data from forty-seven British children aged seven-eleven years by using semi structured interview method. The study result showed that 76% of boys and 60% of girls were verbally aggressive with poor peer relationship and prosocial behavior. Children in the lowest income group (mean 0.96, SD 1.88) scored higher than others (mean 0.04, SD 0.14) on use of Weapons ($p < .05$)⁷.

Evidence has suggested significant negative correlation between physical aggression, verbal aggression ,anger, hostility with psychological wellbeing ($p \leq 0.01$)³.

On support to figure 1, **Nooshin Salomi et.al (2019)** concluded that 29% and 10% of the students had moderate and high levels of aggression, respectively.⁹

A study done among 100 Annamalai University students (2017), showed that mean score of boys (77.28) in respect of aggression behaviour was more than the mean score of girls (65.20).¹

Ana Kozina (2014) concluded that the variables related to socio-economic status, spare time activities and parental activities are significant predictors for

aggressive behavior among children.⁴

Conclusion

Aggression negatively affects student's academic achievement, emotional, mental as well as psychological development and academic performance, schools environment and if not controlled early, it may cause incidents of violence in the future too. The responsively aggressive children are significantly more anxious than non-aggressive children.

Limitations & Recommendations:

The study is limited in the form of a research design, sample chosen and measures undertaken. The current study was limited to only one village area in South India and sample is not nationally representative. Further study will focus on a larger sample size. Also, a comparative study will focus among girls and boys aggressive behavior. Linking positive psychology with aggressive psychology may also lead to certain forces variables which are largely ignored in existing scientific literature. These studies will help counselors and psychotherapists integrate a strong intervention into anger management programs.

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None declared

Ethical Clearance: The Ethical Clearance was obtained from institutional ethical review board. The samples were explained about the study purpose and confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.

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