

## **Aggression Level in Youth : A Comprehensive Study**

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### **Abstract**

The term aggression is a mode of frustration. Aggression has been considered as a defense mechanism in normal psychology whereas, in general, aggression is a normal behavior in all kinds of individuals. The purpose of this comprehensive study was to investigate whether there is a significant level of aggression in youth (college students) of a rural area named Adampur in Haryana, India. The present study has been carried out on a sample of 70 college students (Male and Female) with their age ranging between 17-21 years. The major instrument used in the present study was an Aggression Scale given by Ms. Roma Pal and Ms. Tasneem Naqvi. This scale consists of 30 items with six alternatives. The subjects were selected on the basis of random sampling. After collection of the data, statistical analysis has been done with the help of statistical tools of descriptive statistics and T-test. The findings of the study are indicative that there is an average level of aggression in majority of the participants which is in contrast to the common assumption of increase in aggression levels in youth nowadays.

**Key Words** : Aggression, gender, normal psychology, random sampling.

### **Introduction**

In psychology, Aggression is a term used to describe a variety of actions that have the potential to cause bodily or psychological harm to oneself, other people, or environment-based items. Aggression centers on causing bodily or psychological harm to another individual.

While everyone has occasional episodes of hostility, excessive or pervasive aggression may indicate a physical disease, drug abuse disorder, or underlying mental health condition.

The understanding of aggression has evolved over time, reflecting the complex interplay of biological, psychological, and environmental influences on this behavior. There are diverse perspectives on aggression, ranging from behaviorist and psychoanalytic viewpoints to social learning and situational factors like B.F. Skinner, a behaviorist, defined aggression as any behavior that results in harm or injury to oneself or others and is associated with operant conditioning. He believed that aggressive behavior can be shaped and maintained through reinforcement and punishment. Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, viewed aggression as an innate drive in humans, part of the "death instinct" or Thanatos. According to Freud, aggression is the result of conflicts between this instinct and the "life instinct" (Eros), which strives for love and life preservation. Dollard and Miller extended Freud's ideas, proposing that aggression is the result of a combination of psychological and environmental factors. They defined aggression as a response to a stimulus that arouses an aggressive drive and is coupled with a cue that aggression will be effective in reducing that arousal. Tremblay, a developmental psychologist, defined aggression in the context of child development. He described it as any behavior intended to harm others physically or psychologically and found among young children as part of normal development. He emphasized the

importance of understanding developmental trajectories of aggression while Bandura's social learning theory emphasized on the role of observation and imitation in aggression. He defined aggression as behavior that is learned through observing others and reinforced by various social and environmental factors.

Aggression among youth is an escalating concern not only in India but also in contemporary societies worldwide. It manifests in various forms, including physical violence, verbal abuse, bullying, and, increasingly, online aggression. This research paper seeks to conduct a comprehensive analysis of aggression levels in Indian youth by delving into the factors that contribute to this behavior, and its adverse consequences. The goal is to shed light on the root causes and repercussions of youth aggression, ultimately providing valuable information for policymakers and stakeholders to formulate effective strategies for its prevention and management.

### **Factors Contributing to Youth Aggression :**

The American Psychological Association (APA) defines youth violence as an extreme form of aggression with the goal of physical harm, injury, or death. Examples of youth violence also include date rape, homicides, and gang violence.

There are various factors that contribute to the rise of aggression among youth :

- *Socioeconomic Factors* : A young person's growth of frustration and anger can be greatly influenced by socioeconomic inequality, unemployment, and economic instability. When these emotions are not effectively addressed, they can manifest as aggressive behaviors.
- *Family Environment* : One of the biggest determinants of a young person's behaviour is their family. Family dynamics, including instances of domestic violence, neglect, and a lack of parental support, can create a breeding ground for aggression.

- *Education and School Environment* : Aggression can be exacerbated by a variety of school-related concerns, including bullying, academic stress, and disciplinary issues. Schools play a significant role in the lives of young people. Identifying the importance of the school environment is essential to putting preventive measures into action.
- *Peer Influence* : Peer pressure and the desire to fit in can cause people to adapt to aggressive behaviour within social circles. It might be useful to understand how aggressiveness is influenced by peers when developing tactics that support positive group dynamics.
- *Media and Technology* : It is important to recognise the impact of media and technology on the aggressiveness of young people. Aggressive inclinations can be exacerbated by exposure to violent media, including video games, television shows, and movies, as well as by cyberbullying and online harassment. When creating programmes for media literacy and internet safety, it is essential to look into these factors.
- *Use of Alcohol and Drugs* : Youth aggression has long been linked to alcohol and drug usage. Addiction to drugs and alcohol can both heighten hostility and diminish fear, hence raising the risk of youth violence.

A thorough and all-encompassing approach is necessary to handle the complex issue of aggressiveness among young Indians. This calls for a careful analysis of the numerous variables that influence how juvenile aggressiveness manifests. Moreover, it is important to have a sophisticated comprehension of the extensive ramifications of this kind of conduct. Implementing precise, focused treatments and preventive actions is essential to effectively mitigating these impacts. Together, parents, educators,

legislators, and young people themselves must make an effort to create a culture that supports their development without being burdened by violent impulses. The goal of this coordinated effort is to create a more secure and supportive environment that fosters their wellbeing and adds to the harmony and prosperity of our community.

### **Objective**

To find if there is a significant aggression level among youth in India.

### **Hypothesis**

There is a significant aggression level among youth in India.

### **Literature Review**

- In the study conducted by N Shaban, P Kumar (2016) titled “Young Adults and Aggression : A Comparative Study of Gender Differences”, they concluded that there was no consensus over gender differences on aggression but researches were scattered in view of suggesting males as high, equal or low to females on aggression even though most of the current researches suggest that there is no significant gender difference on aggression. Their current research also supported the view and indicated that both males and females are equal on experiencing aggression.
- A recurring theme in the exploration of young adult aggression is the examination of psychological mediators. Researchers like Anderson and Bushman (2002) in “Human aggression” have explored the psychological mechanisms that underlie aggressive behavior in both men and women. These mediators range from impulsivity and

frustration to cognitive processes. Understanding the mediating factors is essential for understanding the causes of aggressive behavior in young adults.

- Sex Differences in Aggression in Real-World Settings (Archer, 2004) : Archer's meta-analytical review examines gender differences in aggression, focusing on real-world situations. His meta-analysis provides an in-depth review of aggression research, emphasizing the multiple contexts in which gender differences manifest. The meta-analysis reveals interesting trends and serves as a starting point for understanding the complex nature of gender-based aggression.
- Influence of Unrestrained Access to Erotica (Zillmann, 1998) : Zillmann's research investigates the influence of unrestricted access to erotica on adolescents' and young adults' dispositions toward sexuality. Although the primary focus is on sexuality, this study provides insights into the impact of media exposure on attitudes and potentially aggressive behavior.
- Webster and Crysel (2012) in their study "Individual differences in aggression" investigate individual differences in aggression and identify factors that lead individuals to engage in more or less aggressive behavior. Their research highlights the importance of personal and temperamental characteristics in the emergence of aggressive tendencies.
- The study "Hyperactivity and aggression : the role of family relationships" by Williams and Nias(1989) investigated possible links between hyperactivity and aggression, with a particular focus on family relationships. Their research focused on the interaction between family dynamics and child aggression, providing a deeper understanding of the environmental factors that contribute to aggressive behavior.

### **Methodology**

*Sample* : The present study has been conducted on the sample of 70 college students (Girls and Boys) from F.G.M Government College, Adampur, Hisar, Haryana. The age of the participants ranged between 17-21 years.

*Tool* : The major instrument used in the present study was an Aggression Scale given by Ms. Roma Pal and Ms. Tasneem Naqvi. This scale consists of 30 items with six alternatives.

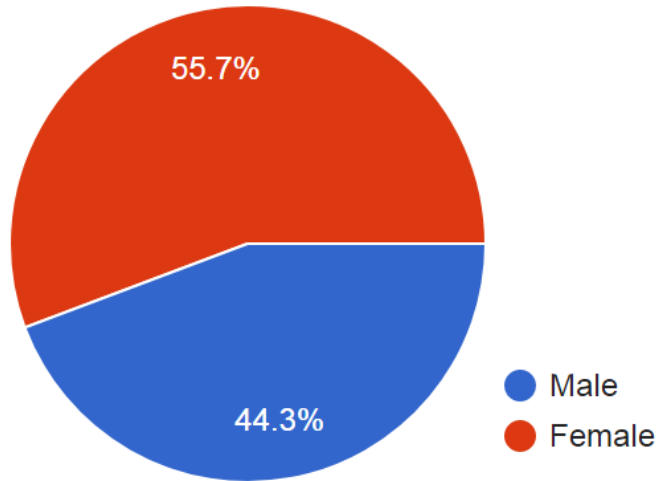
*Procedure* : The above mentioned psychological test was administered to the selected subjects personally and they were asked to read carefully the instructions given in the questionnaire. Subjects were allowed to take their own time to complete the questionnaire. Scoring of this questionnaire was done accordingly to the instructions in their manuals and concerning books.

### **Limitations**

- This study is limited to 70 respondents. So findings and conclusion given on the basis of the study cannot be extrapolated to the entire student population.
- The result fully depends on the information given by the respondents which may be biased.

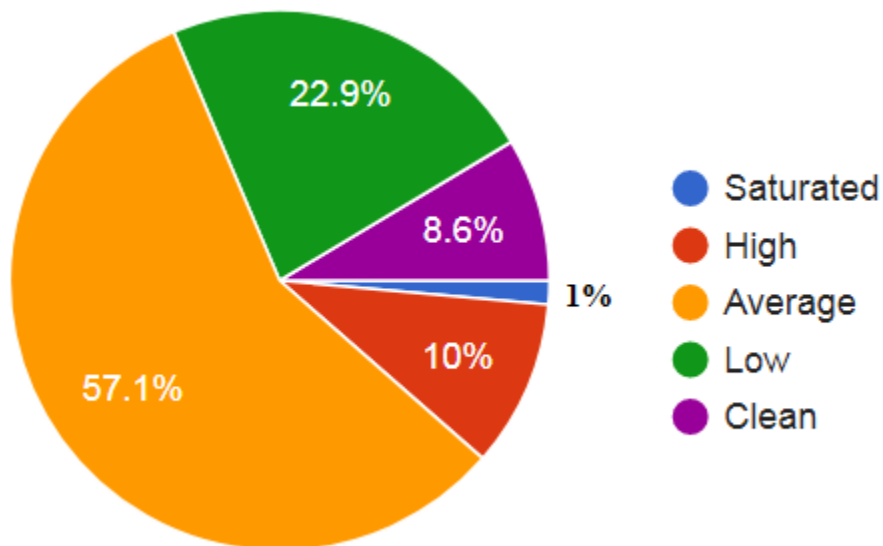
### **Result and Discussion**

- The percentage of participants that was females was 55.7% i.e. 39 out of 70 participants were females
- The rest of the participants forming 44.3% of the sample population was males i.e. 31 out of 70 participants were males.



Level of Aggression									
Saturated		High		Average		Low		Clean	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	1	7	10	40	57.1	16	22.9	6	8.6

Table 1. Level of Aggression in college students





The data showed that :

- In the entire sample, the majority of the students i.e. 57.1% of the total participants showed average aggression level. A whopping number of 40 students out of 70 were in this category.
- The second highest percentage was of students belonging to low aggression level category. The percentage of students that fell in this category was 22.9%.The total students were 16 out of 70.
- 8.6% of the subjects had a clean level of aggression i.e. they don't feel much aggressive at all. A total of 6 students fell in this category.
- High aggression was shown by 10% of the participants. Only 7 out of 70 people were categorized in this level.
- Saturated level or the highest level of aggression was registered in only one participants of 70 i.e. only 1% of the entire sample falls in this category.

Group Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Aggression	70	65.5143	17.02491	2.03487

*Table 2. Mean, standard deviation on scores of the sample.*

The present study is comprehensive study of level of aggression among government college students (male and female) of rural India. T-test has been used to study difference in aggression levels among students.

One-Sample Test						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Aggression	32.196	69	.000	65.51429	61.4548	69.5737

Table 3. *t*-values on scores of the sample

The results of present study revealed that majority of the students who participated in this study have average aggression level. The mean score of sample is 65.51, the standard deviation is 17.02 and the standard error mean is 2.03 and *t*-value for the sample is 32.19. Significant value is 0 (2 tailed *t*-test) and the degree of freedom is 69.

### Conclusion

On the basis of the present research it can be said that there is an average level of aggression in majority of the participants which is in contrast to the common assumption of increase in aggression levels in youth nowadays.. Thus, it can be concluded that aggression isn't exhibited among majority of the college students of rural background (Adampur).

### Future Research

The study was conducted from the students who belonged to a rural area and aggression was not that prevalent among the students. Further research can be conducted in order to check whether there is a difference between aggression levels of students of the city and the students who come from rural areas. Future studies could also research the differences among college students for other mental health disorders

such as disruptive behavior disorders. Different aggression levels can also be measured for female and male students of different states, cities, towns and villages and then comparison can be drawn between them. Additionally, future studies could be conducted to look for differences in aggression levels among international college students in the India.

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