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AGGRESSION IN TOTS AND THEIR REARING

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Aggression, the quality of anger and determination that makes one ready to hurt people is one of the very common characteristics of human behavior. This pattern of behavior is widely learned and often seen imitated by children during the pre-school age. A child is to be manifested to transform his behavior to a socially acceptable manner.

Psychologists of different theoretical persuasions have some basic disagreement about how to define aggression. Aggression is a behavior that deliberately make one feel frightened and hurt. It may be physical attack (hitting, kicking or biting), abusing (yelling, calling offensive nicknames and making derogatory remarks) or violations (e.g. snatching). It refers to observational behavior. A weakness is that it includes many behaviors that would not ordinarily consider aggressive. Aggression can be defined as a behavior that intended to deliberately harm others. This definition takes into account the intentions of the doer, but it may be less objective, for it involves inferences about intentions. Furthermore, it excludes some behavior that would normally be called aggressive. A child who drags out another from his swing as he/she wants to enjoy the same may not intent to hurt the other, but this behavior is generally remarked aggressive. Deliberate hostile attitude is defined as aggression as well.

Some theorists separate petty aggression from hostile aggression. The first one aims at acquiring a goal while the latter is to hurt someone. Much of the aggressions among tots seem to be petty. It caters for possessions, for example children grab toys from one another, push each

other away from the grip of objects they want to play with and bar others from using their toys. They are seldom seen in anger or attempt to hurt someone for something.

Young ones begin to show petty aggression at the age of 12 months. Most of their aggression is related to playthings in peers. Children attack parents and their elders on occasions, but of this are relatively infrequent in comparison to the attacks between peers. As they reach the kindergarten stage and the elementary level of learning their aggressive mood becomes less and there appear changes in the form of their aggression. When they happen to be aggressive, it is more often hostile and less often petty that children become less likely to use direct physical attack to achieve their petty goals. When they verbally or assault, they are more likely to have a hostile motive. Verbal aggression increases in line with age, at least during the pre-school years.

Although children's level of aggression varies from one situation to another, there are consistent individual differences in children prone to aggressive behavior that persists for long. Children who are highly aggressive in the early years are likely to be the same when they reach adolescence and adulthood. Children not aggressive are most likely to be the same in the course of time.

The goal of child-rearing is to germinate in child the capacity to compromise in life and to cater to the requirement of ethics and values of the society to which the child belongs. All the theories related to this are associated with the healthy development of children in their cultural perspective. Cultures hold different conceptions of an ideal child, and these conceptions determine are the main factors in rearing their children.

Society is not an undifferentiated entity. There are large number of ethnic and social class groups, each with its distinct culture, philosophy of life, system of values and ways of behaving. Within these societies permissive and easy-going parents normally allow their children to explore and investigate freely encouraging and rewarding his curiosity and independent behavior. Parents who control and restrict their children's freedom of movement may suppress their tendencies to explore and to investigate and thus inhibit the development of motivations for autonomy and independence.

The study of aggression in pre-schooling tots and the related practice of parents gives an indication of the family and their dealings with their aggressive children. Hence, this study aims at exploring the aggressive and non-aggressive behavior of children who are categorized as controlled and experimental groups.

Objectives of The Study

1. To find out the effect of imitative behavior of ‘aggression exposed group’ and ‘non-aggression exposed group’.
2. To find out the effect of aggressive behavior in ‘aggression exposed group’ and ‘non-aggression exposed group’.
3. To find out the effect of non aggressive behavior in ‘aggression exposed group’ and ‘non-aggression exposed group’.

Hypotheses of The Study

1. There exist no significant difference in imitative behavior of the aggression exposed group and non aggression exposed group.
2. There exist no significant difference in aggressive behavior between controlled group and experimental group.
3. There exist no significant difference in non-aggressive behavior between controlled group and experimental group.

Methodology

Sample:

The sample consisted of 60 children, 31 boys and 29 were girls from Little Flower School, The Bench Mark School, Start Right Pre-school and a Day Care centre in Calicut. The subjects were between the age group of 2 years 6 months to 3 years 6 months. The children were randomly divided into three groups of 20 each and given differential treatment.

The experimental group I, consisted of 11 boys and 9 girls and the experimental group II, 8 boys and 12 girls. In the controlled group there were 12 boys and 8 girls.

Tools:

Measuring ‘aggression in pre-schooling children in relation to child rearing practice’ developed by the investigators.

Procedure:

The experiment was conducted in two sessions. In the first session, children were exposed to their perspective models for six minutes. Two B.Sc. students acted as models. They had no prior familiarity with the subjects but were familiar with the nursery school set up.

For Experimental group I, the aggressive model performed the following action in sequence, i.e., hitting the doll with hammer, kicking the doll with toes, putting the doll on floor and riding on it, flinging the doll in the air, pulling doll’s hair, hammering aggressively, shooting at others, breaking toys and squeezing a doll. For experimental group II, the non-aggressive model repeated the following behavioral acts in sequence, i.e., making the doll walk, patting the doll, making the doll sit and making the doll eat and drink, playing with carpentry toys, kissing the doll, combing doll’s hair and playing with gun. Responses like leaning forward to see the model acting, talking about the model etc. were recorded by the investigator. Time sampling of one minute was used for total time span of six minutes. At the end of the first session, one minute rest was given to the subjects, after which session II started. Here children were allotted to play with variety of toys like pressing rubber toys, carpentry toys, guns etc. which were pre arranged in a fixed order of all sessions. This session was to locate the effect of exposure to the respective models on the children’s aggressive behavior. Responses of limitation and non limitation behavior like hitting and kicking the doll, biting other children etc. were recorded. The total time for session II was 15 minutes which was time sampled for every minute. The control group was directly given to session II.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Imitative Behavior

The imitative behavior of the aggression exposed group and non-aggression exposed group is recorded and it is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Mean and Standard deviation of imitative behavior among pre-school children

GROUPS	N	Mean	S.D
Group I(Aggression exposed group)	20	5.80	3.44
Group II(Non aggression exposed group)	20	4.90	2.83
All Groups	40	5.35	3.14

Average number of the imitation of the aggression group is 5.80 and that of non-aggression group is 4.90 with standard deviation 3.44 and 2.83 respectively. The analysis of variance was done on the scores of two categories of aggression and non-aggression exposed group, the F-ratio was calculated in order to find out the significance differences in the mean performance of two groups and it is presented in Table 2.

Table 2
ANOVA of Imitative behavior

GROUPS	Sum of squares	d.f	Mean Square	F-value	p-level
Between Groups	8.10	1	8.10	0.816446	0.371914
Within Groups	377.00	38	9.92		
Total	385.10	39			

From Table 2, the calculated F-value is 0.8164 and the p-value is 0.3719, which shows that there is no significant difference between aggression and non-aggression group in imitation of the behaviors.

(a) Non-imitative behavior

The non imitative behavior of the aggression exposed group and non-aggression exposed group is recorded and it is presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Non-imitative behavior of aggression and non aggression groups

GROUPS	N	Mean	S.D
Group I(Aggression exposed group)	20	3.85	1.81
Group II(Non-aggression exposed group)	20	3.50	3.00
All Groups	40	3.67	2.45

Average number of the non imitative behavior of the aggression group is 3.85 and that of non-aggression group is 3.50 with standard deviation 1.81 and 3.00 respectively. The analysis of

variance was done on the scores of two categories of aggression and non-aggression exposed group, the F-ratio was calculated in order to find the significance differences in the mean performance of two groups and it is presented in Table 4.

Table 4
ANOVA of Non imitative behavior

GROUPS	Sum of squares	d.f	Mean Square	F-value	p-level
Between Groups	1.23	1	1.23	0.199315	0.657808
Within Groups	233.55	38	6.15		
Total	234.78	39			

From Table 4, the calculated F-value is 0.199 and the p-value is 0.657, which shows that there is no significant difference between aggression and non-aggression group in non-imitative behavior of the two groups.

(b) Aggressive Behavior

The aggression behavior of the experimental groups and control group is presented in Table 5.

Table 5
Aggression behavior of the experimental groups and control group

GROUPS	N	Mean	S.D
Group I(Aggression exposed group)	20	5.80	3.44
Group II(Non-aggression exposed group)	20	3.50	3.00
Control group	20	0.90	2.05
All Groups	60	3.40	3.48

Table 5 reveals that the average number of the aggressive behavior of aggression exposed group is 5.80 with standard deviation 3.44. Average number of the aggressive behavior of the non-aggression group is 3.50 with standard deviation 3.0 and that of the control group is 0.9 with

standard deviation 2.05. The analysis of variance is applied for calculating the significant difference between these groups, which is presented in Table 6.

Table 6
ANOVA of aggression behavior of control group and experimental group

GROUPS	Sum of squares	d.f	Mean Square	F-value	p-level
Between Groups	240.40	2	120.20	14.3937	0.000009
Within Groups	476.00	57	8.35		
Total	716.40	59			

There exists significant difference between three groups, since the calculated value of F is 14.39 at 1% level of significance ($p < 0.01$). Aggressive behavior of the group which exhibited aggression activities is higher than that of the group which exhibited non-aggression activities and control group.

(c) Non-aggressive Behavior

The Non-aggression behavior of the experimental groups and control group is presented in Table 7.

Table 7
Non aggression behavior of the experimental groups and control group

GROUPS	N	Mean	S.D
Group I(Aggression exposed group)	20	3.85	1.81
Group II(Non-aggression exposed group)	20	4.90	2.83
Control group	20	3.95	1.67
All Groups	60	4.23	2.18

Table 7 reveals that the average number of the non-aggressive behavior of aggression exposed group is 3.85 with standard deviation 1.81. Average number of the aggressive behavior of the non-aggression group is 4.90 with standard deviation 2.83 and that of the control group is 3.95 with S.D 1.67. The analysis of variance is applied for calculating the significant difference between these groups, which is presented in Table 8.

Table 8

ANOVA of non-aggressive behavior of control group and experimental group

GROUPS	Sum of squares	d.f	Mean Square	F-value	p-level
Between Groups	13.43	2	6.72	1.432286	0.247225
Within Groups	267.30	57	4.69		
Total	280.73	59			

There is no significant difference in non aggressive behavior among three groups. i.e, ‘aggressive activity exposed group’, ‘non-aggressive activity exposed group’ and ‘control group’, since the calculated F value is 1.43 ($p > 0.05$).

Conclusion

The study reveals that there are many factors that influence aggression in children. During the early years of a child's life, parents control the child's experiences of frustration and gratification, determine whether he is reinforced for aggressive or non-aggressive behavior, and serve as models for the child to imitate. For these reasons, there has been considerable interest in exploring the relations between various aspects of a child's home environment and the development of aggressive behavior. This research area presents several problems. First one cannot manipulate and control child-rearing practices but must study their effects in the context of a large number of correlated influences. Particular parental behaviors, such as maternal rejection or severe punishment, do not operate in isolation but occur in conjunction with other aspects of the home environment. In addition, the child's behavior may well affect his parent's reactions to him so that it is sometimes difficult to determine whether a particular parental method of handling a child is a cause or is a result of the child's actions. Second, a variety of methods, all subject to varying degrees of distortion and other sources of error have been used to assess parental attitudes and behaviors. In spite of these, the research suggests several conclusions:

1. There is no significant difference between aggression exposed group and non-aggression exposed group in imitative behavior.
2. There is no significant difference between aggression exposed group and non-aggression exposed group in non-imitative behavior.
3. Group exposed to aggressive model showed more aggression than the two groups exposed to non-aggressive and control group.
4. The three groups under study differ significantly in their mean performance on aggression.

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