

INTRODUCTION

THE MIND
WHAT SHALL WE CALL IT ?
IT IS THE SOUND OF THE BREEZE
THAT BLOWS THROUGH THE PINES
IN THE INDIA INK PICTURE

*What shall we call the mind ? That is a constant question.
It is just soap bubbles — or wind blowing through the pine tree.
It is not substantial.*

*Your thoughts are not even rice paper thick.
They are just signatures on water.
But they dominate your life.*

*It is ultimately your responsibility. You can stop this very moment and get out of
the slavery — nobody is forcing you to be a slave of your mind.
You can move just any moment you decide.
There is no need to delay or to postpone.*

'Osho'
A Bird on the Wing

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

क्रोधाद् भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविम्रमः
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति

Krodhad bhavati Sammohah

Sammohat smriti – vibhramah

Smriti – bhramsad buddhi naso

Buddhi – nasat pranasyati

Translation

From anger, complete delusion arises, and from delusion bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost one falls down again into the material pool.

True to the words of ‘Lord Krishna’ in ‘Geeta’ ‘anger’ is the origin and source of many complex individual problems. From times immemorial, man has been getting lessons, from various religious scriptures and learned men, to inhibit and control their aggressive tendencies expressions. But quite the contrary, history of humankind unleashes a totally different picture magnifying the barbaric make up of the human being.

1.1 AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Ashley Montagu (1976), a noted anthropologist describes one researchers attempt to tabulate the number of wars in recorded history. The result : 14, 531 wars or on an average 2.6 wars every year. This tally was computed in 1960’s and since then the world has witnessed war in Cambodia, several wars in the Middle East, the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan followed by a bloody guerilla insurgency, a British skirmish with Argentina over the Falkland islands,

insurgency, a British skirmish with Argentina over the Falkland islands, prolonged conflict between Iran and Iraq. In Ethiopia and South Africa, the September 11th, 2001 attack on twin towers in U.S,... the list is endless. War is institutionalized aggression, conducted by groups, usually nation states. However, aggression just does not has a full stop there. It intrudes even into the intimate family relationships. There are endless/ thousands of cases of child abuse and neglect reported each year. Children witnessing their mothers and fathers beating each other, and in Indian society, spouse beating occurs in most social classes and ethnic groups. In fact the figures are startling when one observes the crime rate projections in India, America and other parts of the world. The following facts and figures reflect this scenario more clearly.

Table 1(a) : Crime rate comparisons in the year 1996 between India and USA.

Crime Report (For 1996)	India	USA
Homicides (Murders)	37671	19650
Rapes	14846	96250
Property Cases	380,000	11,805,300
Violent Crime	243,574	1,688,540
Overall Crime Rate (Per 100,000)	185.1	5,086.6
Population	960.2 Million	265.2 Million

A 1995 report on crime data indicates some concerning numbers as well Table 1(b) depicts these.

Table 1(b) : Crime data of USA and other parts of the world in 1995.

<p>There were 4 murders, 1.5 rapes and 2.5 robberies per 100,000 people in India (With a total population of 960 million), while USA was witness to, around 9 murders, 38 rapes and 221 robberies per 100,000 people (In a population of 271 million).</p> <p>Also, although population of Canada and France is up to 10 folds less than that of US (270 million), the former endures up to double the crime rates as compared to the US.</p>
--

Moreover, aggression has become more prevalent and grounded in adolescents these days. Kicking, beating, shouting, screaming, ridiculing using abusive language, and usage of threatening instruments like knives guns and other life harming objects, at the first violent spur or instinct; without a second thought of how it could harm or destroy another fellow human's life.

One such ordeal gave inspiration to initiate work in this area, and led to this research work. It was in March 1999, when the researcher heard the B.B.C. News, about the shocking incident of a student shooting his teacher right inside one of the United States based school premises. Soon again, another such incident recurred in the Indian state of Bihar. As can be seen across our daily newspapers, adolescent aggression seems to be rising steeply. This offered ground for the researcher to challenge and find realistic solutions and therapeutic treatments, to combat the problem of aggression. Also, it was felt that success of such an intervention would act as a stepping stone towards contributing to the society at large.

1.1.1 Definition of Aggression

Due to the alarming frequency, and devastating consequences, aggression has long been a topic of careful research in Social Psychology (Baron and Richardson, 1994). Although it may seem that everybody understands what aggression is, but unfortunately there is considerable disagreement, as to what behaviour should be considered aggressive? However, most Psychologists agree that aggression is considered as a typical adjustment mechanism to hurt, injure, harm or destroy the source of frustration. Johnson, 1972,; Baron, 1977; Krebs and Miller, 1985 stress that aggression is a behaviour directed against another living being that is intended to harm or injure. Beck, R.C. explains that 'aggression' refers to a wide variety of behaviours, which occur under a wide variety of conditions. With humans, the common defining element is generally considered to be "intent to harm someone else". However, intent is often

difficult to demonstrate. Like the doctor administering an inoculation to a screaming child cannot be considered aggressive; but a woman nagging and criticizing her husband, could be overpowered by aggression i.e. in a way to injure or harm the reputation of her husband, because of the injury caused to her. The range of factors influencing aggressive behaviours includes: Frustration, irritation, anger, arousal, imitation, instrumental reward and social norms, as well as biological factors such as hormones, blood sugar level and brain damage.

1.1.2 Types of Aggression

Most Psychologists consider aggression to be a category of diverse behaviours under which two subordinate categories of behaviours can be subsumed :

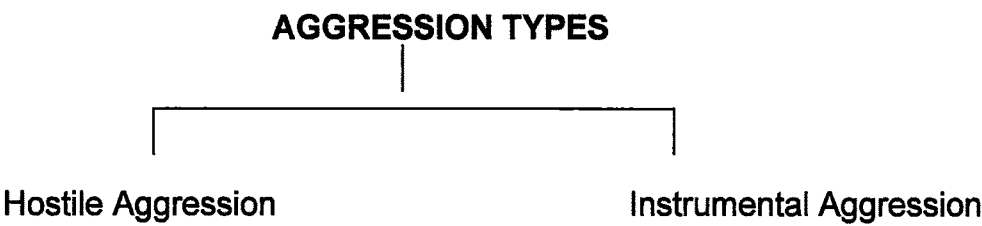


Fig. 1.0: Explanation of Different Types of Aggression

Hostile Aggression : This is the kind of aggression, which is generally provoked by pain or upset. It has more of an emotional content and its primary purpose, is to do harm.

Instrumental aggression : Not necessarily caused by anger or emotion, but constitutes the gaining of some desired or valuable goods, rewards or money, from others. Hence, the primary goal of instrumental aggression remains not necessarily to injure another person but only to attain the desired outcome.

Table 2.0 : Elaborates on the differences between the two categories of aggression.

HOSTILE AGGRESSION	INSTRUMENTAL AGGRESSION
<p>1. It is emotional in nature. Provoked by hurt, pain, upset; with the sole purpose to injure or harm its target. It includes cases of physical assault, verbal abuse and other antisocial behaviours.</p> <p>For example: A husband who punches his wife, after she yells at him. You are a bust, your are a failure – I want you out of here. I can always get men who'll work, good men, not someone like you". It seems likely that this husband was furious, when he punched his wife and fully intended to harm her.</p>	<p>1. It is not necessarily caused by anger or emotion. Its primary goal is to gain, rewards, money, valuable goods from others.</p> <p>For example: A child who hits another child to obtain a desired toy or a basketball player, might knock her team mate down as they both run to tackle the ball. The girl's aggressive behaviour here, was not intended to harm her team mate, rather her goal was, to gain possession of the ball and to score.</p> <p>Robbers who assault their victim do so to gain money, not with the purpose of harming.</p> <p>-- A presidential candidate who spreads damaging gossip about an opponent., is another such example.</p>
<p>2. Hostile impulses may be turned into deadly behaviours by the presence of environmental cues or stimuli (like a weapon).</p>	<p>2. Instrumental aggression, may be controlled more by environmental rewards and histories of social learning.</p>
<p>3. Hostile aggression may be reduced if the person in a passionate rage is distracted.</p>	<p>3. It can be reduced by changing the rewards and punishments, which sustain or inhibit the aggressive behaviour</p>

Individuals respond in varied patterns, when exposed to aggression provoking situations. The section below elaborates these patterns.

1.1.3 Patterns Of Aggressive Behaviour

Given below are a few case studies in this context:

CASE STUDY I: Ramesh is fourteen years of age. He is hardly able to qualify his examinations. However, his younger brother is bright and always manages to get good marks. Ramesh's father often compares 'Ramesh' with his brother. This is disapproved by Ramesh and unconsciously he develops a deep disliking towards his brother. He waits for suitable occasions, where he could physically harm and hit his brother.

CASE STUDY II: Amit is a diligent, but a quiet boy studying in the XIth standard. He studies well and expects to get the first rank. Unfortunately, he is unable to do so. He punishes himself by not eating properly and avoids participating in any recreational activities. Amit also inhibits himself from mixing with others at home or in school, as he used to before.

CASE STUDY III: Dipti is watching her favourite T.V. programme with her friend. They both are laughing at the top of their voices, watching an amusing character. Suddenly, her sister comes and throws her slippers hard on the Television set. On this, Dipti gets upset and starts screaming and using abusive language.

CASE STUDY IV: Bijli and Renu, are reading a filmfare magazine together. Bijli tells Renu, that she wants to take the magazine with her. Renu refuses her request. When Renu goes inside the kitchen to get water, Bijli spills ink on the magazine. On returning Renu quarrels and screams at Bijli. Bijli then tears the whole magazine.

From the above mentioned cases, the different patterns or ways of expressing, aggressive behaviour in individuals are recognized. The response of 'Amit' clearly portrays his intention to hurt or punish himself. While few others like Ramesh, Dipti and Bijli, hit, scream, answer back or abusive language when subjected to deep-rooted frustration. These cases interestingly, reveal the

responses of individuals under two headings – aggression to external objects and individuals (direct aggression), or (indirect aggression) as on one self .

1.1.4 Direct and Indirect Aggression

The individual here aggressively attributes the cause of his frustration, to external persons or things. It could take the form of a physical attack on another individual or be manifested through verbal forms of expression to aggress against another. People who hurt others (indirectly) by their sarcastic comments, come in this category. However, many a times the individual, is unable to take any step against the person in authority and in these cases the aggression is shifted to inanimate objects or even animals.

Aggression on Self

The individual here attributes, the source/cause of frustration on his own self and further tends to inflict physical punishment on his self. As also referred in the case study of ‘Amit’, Deutsch and Fishman (1963) in the ‘Encyclopedia of Mental Health’ have cited some interesting case studies in this context. In one of their studies, they have quoted about a “middle aged, successful businessman, who suppresses many of his ‘aggressive feelings’ towards his dead parents. Externally taking out his frustrative feelings, he frequently shouted at his wife and children and accused her, of not rearing their children properly. Though in his calmer states, he felt genuine concern for his entire family and worked hard to give them everything they wanted”. In another instance, “a man in his mid twenties, had a need, to be “the best” driver. Frequently the police caught him violating traffic rules, at the risk of his life. On many occasions, he had difficulty with other drivers, whom he attempted to “beat out” on the road”.

In both these cases, great deal of aggressive behaviour was used in a way, that was extremely injurious to their own selves, as well as others.

The above discussion clarifies the different patterns of aggressive behaviour. But mere identification of such a behaviour is of no avail. It becomes vital to unleash and know the causes behind such behaviour. Research in this context elucidates, for no single cause but a combination of causes leading to aggressive expression in human beings, as has been elaborated in the forthcoming section.

1.2 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON AGGRESSION

The ‘Existential approach’ of Psychology introspects on why humans aggress against others? What makes them turn, with brutality unmatched by even the fiercest of predators, against their fellow human beings? Scientists and scholars from different fields have pondered over these questions for centuries and have proposed many contrasting explanations for the paradox of human violence. In this section, several influential explanations have been examined and put forward by social psychologists. Also, some newer theories based on modern ideas about human cognition and human behaviour, are trying to cover this perspective from a different view point.

1.2.1 Explanation Of Aggressive Behaviour

Social theorists have tried to explain aggression at many different levels, as has been summarized in Table 3.0.

As the table here clearly portrays, at the “group level” of explanation – Biological groups (for example, species) and cultural groups may influence aggression.

Table 3.0: Explanations of Aggression

	Level of explanation	Theories	Variables or/ Processes studied
Group Level	Biological Group Social Groups	Instinct theories	Biological evolution, social norms, cross-cultural variations
Individual Level	Heredity and Physiology		Brain structures, hormones, sex differences, heretability
	Past environment	Social Learning Theory	Classical conditioning, Operant conditioning, Observational Learning
	Current Environment	Frustration-aggression hypothesis Aggressive Cues	Modeling effects, Media effects, pain, heat, situation produced frustration Weapons effect” “Violent pornography, media effects.
Mediating Variables	Personality Traits		Stability of aggressiveness over time.
	Emotional Arousal	Schacter-Singer theory	Effects of extraneous arousal and sexual arousal
	Drive theory (Learning Theory) Attitudes		Effects of arousal on learned aggressive responses Effects of pornography on attitude towards women, towards rape, media effects, etc.

At the “individual level” – an individual’s heredity and physiology (hormone levels, biological sex, brain function, past environment) and the current environment (heat, pain, environmental influences) can stir up aggression.

At the third level are “mediating variables” – hypothetical processes within individuals, can assert influence on aggressive behaviour. Like : instincts, emotions, arousal, attributions, schemas and personality traits. Thus research suggests, no single ‘cause’ of human aggression. The number of broad factors which influence aggression have been suggested by social scientist in form of various theories.

1.2.2 Instinct Theories

Psychological theories of aggression have their roots in Charles Darwin theorizing during, middle 1800’s on evolutionary processes. Darwin’s idea on how environmental pressures influence the physical characteristics of organisms were well known, but less known was Darwin’s view that environmental pressures also influence the behavioral characteristics of species. He viewed the cooperative behaviour of social insects such as ants, for example, as resulting from an instinctual, genetically based adaptation that promoted the survival of the species. The socio-biological explanation of human aggression is a direct extension of Darwin’s view of the evolutionary basis for social behaviour. He explained, human aggression results from an instinctual, genetically based adaptation to a hostile environment over the course of human evolution.

Sigmund Freud often made use of the notion of instincts in the psychodynamic theories of behaviour which he developed during the late 1800’s and 1900’s. Perhaps nowhere in his theorizing, is the instinctual basis for behaviour more prominent than in his explanation for human aggression. He views aggression as being instinctive. *Sigmund Freud* (1930) while establishing this basis argued, people are often motivated by primitive, biologically based, aggressive impulses. He stressed, the seeds of aggression lie in the human personality. A

significant portion of one's unconscious psychological processes are governed by 'Thanatos'. 'Thanatos', or the 'death instinct', is a reservoir of aggressive and often self-destructive, tendencies which Freud considered to be part of the human species evolutionary heritage. The psychic energy dedicated to 'Thanatos' is thought to build over time, until it is released in aggressive behaviour. A periodic discharge or catharsis, of this psychic energy is necessary for psychological health. If these hostile impulses remain unreleased, they soon reach high levels, capable of generating dangerous acts of violence.

Kornad Lorenz (1966, 1974), a Noble Prize winning scientist too proposed aggression springing mainly from an inherited 'fighting instinct', which human beings share, with many other species. Presumably, this instinct developed during the course of evolution; yields important benefits, like, dispersing population over a wide area. In addition, Lorenz contended, this instinct is often closely related to mating. Fighting helps to assure, that only the strongest and most vigorous individuals will pass their genes onto the next generation. And, when these impulses are turned inward, they cause men to restrict their energies, to punish themselves, to become masochists, and in some extreme cases, to commit suicide. Contrarily, when the same impulses are turned outward, they are manifested in aggressive, warlike behaviour.

Sociobiologists, as Baron affirm, many aspects of social behaviour as the result of evolutionary processes, favouring patterns of behaviour which contribute to reproduction (to getting one's genes into the next generation; e.g. *Ardrey*, 1976; *Barkow*, 1989. Sociobiologists argue since aggression aids males of many species in obtaining mates). So the principles of natural selection, favours increasing levels of aggression, atleast among males.

Criticism: The Instinct theories are often scientifically unsatisfying, as their explanation is circular. When instinct theories have to provide testable hypothesis, they simply prove to be wrong. As Baron reasons, these theorists start by observing aggression as a common form of behaviour. On the basis of

this fact, they then reason for such behaviour stemming from universal, built in urges or tendencies. Finally, they use the high incidence of aggression, as support for the presence of such instincts and impulses. This definitely leads to a questionable logic.

Several other findings argue the existence of universal, innate human tendencies toward aggression. In many developed countries, rates of violent crimes are much lower than those reported earlier for the United States. While in many developing nations, rates are even higher (*Osterman et al*, 1994). These huge differences in the incidence of aggression suggest such behaviour as strongly influenced by social and cultural factors, and even if it stems in part from innate tendencies, these are literally overwhelmed by social conditions. For these and other reasons, an overwhelming majority of social psychologists reject instinct theories of aggression. Such theories are definitely viewed as intriguing, but largely unverified proposals, concerning the origins of human violence.

To summarize this perspective, *Maynard-Smith* (1974) asserted “many species fight if they must but bluff or flee, if they can”. While *Montagu* (1976) expressed “within social species, aggression is used to compete – not to kill – and to enforce the social “law and order of dominance” hierarchies.”

1.2.3 Drive Theories

The development of behaviorism as a major influence in psychology in the United States during the early 1900's saw a rejection of many of the principles of Freudian psychodynamic theories. Most prominent behaviorist explanation for aggression came in the form of frustration – aggression hypothesis, developed by *John Dollard* and his colleagues in Yale in the late 1930's. Dollard was part of a movement initiated by behaviorists to translate Freudian theories into behaviorist terms. In other words, reformulating psychoanalytic theory by use of S.R. theory. One of the theories which emerged during that point of time were the ‘Drive Theories’. ‘Drive theories’ in contrast to ‘instinct

theories' propose, the external conditions such as frustration or any interference with goal directed behaviour – arouse strong motive to harm others. This aggressive drive, in turn leads to overt acts of aggression. By far, the most famous of these theories is the well known frustration – aggression hypothesis (*Dollard et al*, 1939). Further, *Berkowitz* (1939) too noted, frustration leading to the arousal of a drive, whose primary goal was to harm some person/object: primarily the perceived cause of frustration. The major innovation of the frustration – aggression hypothesis, was replacement of the unobservable, instinctual basis of aggression suggested by Freud with observably frustrated goals, by this school of thought.

1.2.4 Frustration and Aggression

Many psychologists have queried on whether frustration as being some of a psychological pain and a likely cause for aggression. The examples below outline this concept more clearly.

“A woman competing in a golf tournament puts a “sure one”, only to have the ball roll up to the hole and stop right before falling in. Disgusted, she swears and throws her club down in disgust.” Or “A student learns, he had failed an exam which he thought he would top and he snaps at his friend, when asked, how he did?”

This hypothesis views, frustration to attain any desired goal will always lead to aggression and all aggression ultimately results from some type of frustration. Subsequently, the displacement of aggressive urges occur when the frustrated person is unable to aggress against the frustrating agent. Aggression here is seen as a drive, much like hunger. As hunger is caused by deprivation of food; aggression is caused by frustration of desired goals. *Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer* and *Sears* (1939), aligned their thoughts with the frustration – aggression hypothesis and emphasized on frustration always leading to aggression and in turn aggression always being the cause for frustration.

The frustration – aggression hypothesis generated a considerable amount of empirical research for a number of years. Interest in this concept then flagged, for the most part, until the 1960's, when *Berkowitz* published his revised frustration – aggression hypothesis that acknowledged the important role of social cues in the instigation of aggression.

CRITICISM: *Baron* (1977) gave a contrary hypothesis, that frustration does not inevitably lead to aggression. Studies indicate, our thought processes mediate this relationship. He argued, arbitrary and strong frustration in particular leads people to aggression, whereas mild frustration or frustrations which exist for a “good reason”, are less likely to provoke aggression. He cited, “If you are sopped behind a car at an intersection when the light turns green, yet you can't move because the driver in front of you is combing his hair, you will probably feel angry, and perhaps you'll honk in frustration. But if you are stuck at the intersection because the driver in front of you had a heart attack and is being carried off by paramedics, you probably will not feel hostility. You are frustrated, but there is a good reason for your delay.”

Burnstein and *Worchel*, 1962; *Worchel*, 1974 found, the effect of frustration depends on our cognitive (mental) expectancies and how reasonable the frustration seems to be. According to them, ‘frustration does not always and inevitably lead to aggression.’ Conversely, the hypothesis, ‘aggression always presupposes frustration’ is false as well. Also, aggression need not be elicited by either pain or frustration, it can also be a learned response.

But the good hope offered by drive theories is that they attribute aggression to external conditions rather than to innate tendencies, crucial in the occurrence of aggression. Thus, they seem to offer somewhat more hope about the possibility of preventing such behaviour than if this kind of behaviour was biologically controlled.

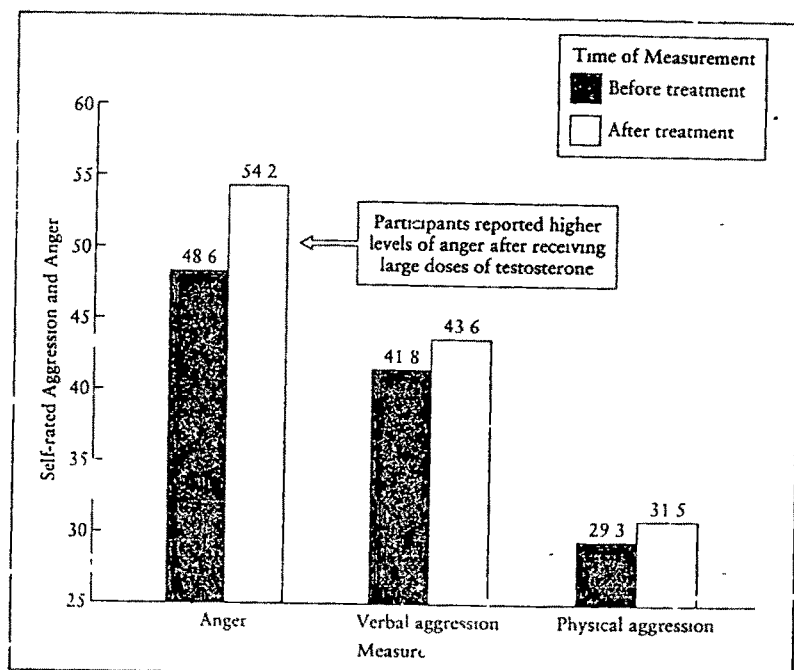
1.2.5 Biological Theories: Physiology and Aggression

There is increasing recognition by social psychologists about the importance of biological factors in many forms of social behaviour (Nisbett, 1990), and aggression is no exception to this general pattern. Indeed, growing evidence point towards the biological factors which predispose some individuals toward aggression (Glaude, 1991)

In one of the recent investigations, conducted with female transsexuals; who decided to change their gender from female to male (Van Goozen, Frijda and De Poll, 1994). As part of their medical treatment, these individuals received regular, large doses of male sex hormones (testosterone) either by injection or orally. During the study, transsexuals completed questionnaires designed to assess their level of overt aggression and their tendency to become angry in various situations (anger – proneness), these measures were completed both before the women began receiving male sex hormones and three months later.

Results showed little change (Fig. 1) in reports of overt aggression, either physical or verbal, as the participants reported higher tendencies to become angry after receiving these hormones.

FIGURE 1
The Effects of Testosterone on Anger. Female transsexuals who received large doses of testosterone as part of their sex-change treatment reported increased tendencies to experience anger, relative to the period before they received these hormones
(Source: Based on data from Van Goozen, Frijda, & de Poll, 1994)



Research has shown proof of several distinct biological factors, controlling aggression. First aggression, is influenced by specific structures in the brain: regions of the temporal lobe (the sides of the cortex, or surface of the brain) and of the limbic system (a crescent shaped array of structures deep inside the brain).

Clinical evidence suggests, tumors, infections or diseases in these areas can trigger aggression. (*Moyer, 1976*). Brain injuries before or during birth may also contribute to later aggression (*Mednick, Brennan and Kandel, 1988*). In one study, a man with a tumor in the temporal lobe attempted to kill his wife and daughter with a butcher knife (*Sweet, Ervin and Mark, 1969*). After surgery when his tumor was removed, his aggressiveness also subsided.

Body chemistry too can influence aggression. In particular some studies suggest a relationship between the sex hormone testosterone and aggression (*Olweus, 1986*) which may partly account for the well documented finding that men and boys are more aggressive than women and girls (*Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974, 1980*) and these sex differences occur across cultures and across species of primates. Also, it has been reported that men are more aggressive than women particularly when the kind of aggression measured produces pain and injury rather than psychological harm (*Eagly and Steffen, 1986*).

But, as 'The Encyclopedia of Mental Health' relates, the extent to which constitutional factors operate may also depend on the atmosphere in which one develops. Parental incompatibility, broken homes, alcoholism in one or both parents, unethical practices by parents – are some of the many determinants which color the development of aggressive impulses in the young. Any of these factors can cause feelings of disappointment and aggressive reactions. The "black sheep of the family" frequently develops, from a combination of constitutional and environment determinant. Infact, social theorists emphasize, aggression as a learned social behaviour.

The forthcoming section, has noted how aggression can be a learned form of behaviour.

1.2.6 Social Learning Theory: Aggression As Learned Social Behaviour.

Social Learning Theories, answer the query, about aggression being Innate or Learned?

Albert Bandura (1973) argues, people may learn to be aggressive (or non aggressive) through both instrumental conditioning and observational learning. In another study (*Bandura*, 1973, 1986, *Baron* and *Richardson*, 1994) emphatically stressed, aggression, like other complex forms of social behaviour, is largely learned. According to this approach, human beings are not born with a large array of aggressive responses at their disposal. Rather, they acquire these in much the same way as, they acquire other complex forms of social behaviour: through direct experience or by observing the actions of others. In case of human beings, their behaviour is influenced both by primary (unlearned) reinforcers as food, drink and sex and by secondary (learned) reinforcers as money, material goods and social status. Studies indicate, when aggression brings people money, material goods or social approval, it is more likely to occur in the future (*Buss*, 1971, *Gaebelein*, 1973; *Walters* and *Brown*, 1963).

Children, in one field study, were attempted to retaliate in response to other childrens aggression. When children succeeded (for e.g., by regaining an expropriated toy), they subsequently tended to be more aggressive. Apparently this suggests if you fight and win, you are more likely to fight again. Thus, when a particular behaviour is rewarded, an individual is more likely to repeat it in the future. And if punished, it is less likely to get repeated. Like a child learns not to track mud onto his clothes, similarly he also learns not to express aggression. He knows, he will be punished when he punches his brother, throws stones at the girl next door, or bites his mother. There and then in the process he learns not to do these things. Similarly, when rewarded he restrains

himself, despite frustrations and learns this particular behaviour pattern. In this manner most individuals learn to control their aggressive impulses at an early stage.

The importance of observational learning is central even in *Banduras* (1973) analysis. He explained, not only can people become aggressive just by watching others, they can also learn through observation and imitation when aggression is being rewarded and when punished.

A Child in particular, has a strong tendency to imitate others. If he watches people eat with a fork or listens to them talking, he tries out the same. This imitation extends virtually to every kind of behaviour, including aggression. For example : If a child observes other people being aggressive and controlling their aggression, he copies that as well. He learns from them to aggress verbally – to shout at people, to curse and to criticize and not to resort to violence – not to punch people or throw stones or blow up buildings. He also learns when, if ever, each of these behaviors is permissible. Thus, his own aggressive behaviour is shaped and determined by what he observes others doing.

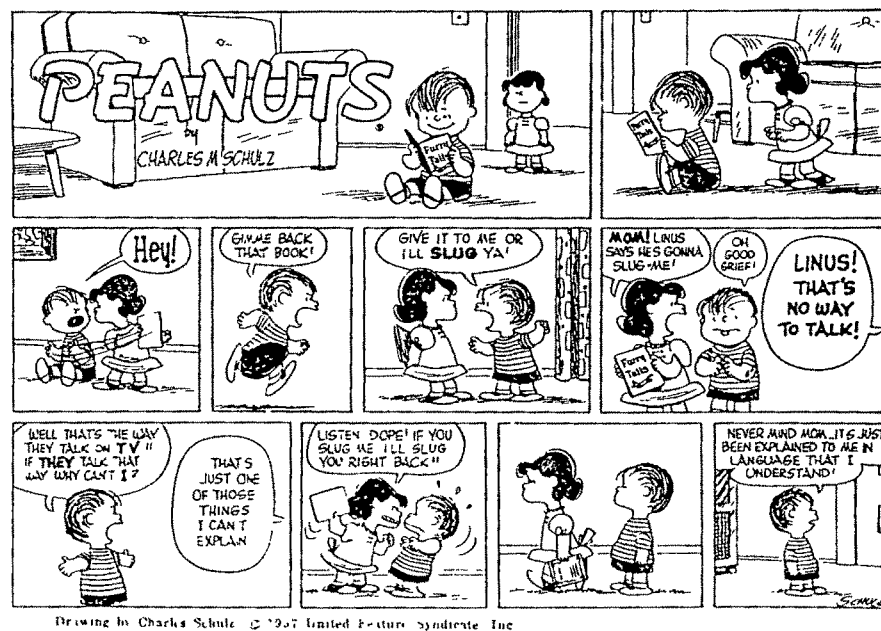


Fig. 2 Role of imitation in aggression.

In short, the social learning perspective suggests whether a specific person will aggress in a given situation, depends on a vast array of factors including that person's past experience, the current reinforcements (rewards) associated with aggression, and many variables that shape the person's thoughts and perceptions concerning the appropriateness and potential effects of such behaviour.

Since most of these factors if not all, are open to change. In this context, the social learning approach becomes quite promising, with respect to the possibility of preventing or controlling overt aggression.

1.2.7 Cognitive Theories Of Aggression: The Role Of Scripts, Appraisals And Affect

'Baron', cites an instance, "Imagine you are in a busy supermarket, when suddenly another shopper runs into you with his cart. How do you react? Certainly, with surprise and pain. But do you retaliate in kind, showing your cart into his ? Or do you swallow your annoyance and proceed with your shopping? Obviously, this depends on many different factors: the size and apparent ferocity of the shopper, who else is present on the scene, and so on". According to several modern theories of aggression, cognitive factors play a crucial role in determining, how one will react. Social Psychologists stress, it involves the usage of 'scripts'. 'Scripts' are cognitive programs for the events that are supposed to happen in a given setting. If your script for visiting a supermarket doesn't include getting into a battle with another shopper, this factor would probably operate against retaliation on your part in this setting.

Another cognitive factor which influences ones behaviour is ones interpretation of the situation – the appraisal of why the other shopper bumped into you. Did she do it on purpose? Was it totally an accident? The individual does a quick assessment of available information (for instance, is the other shopper smiling in glee or apologizing profusely?) and then very quickly, decides whether there was malice on other persons part or not. This initial appraisal may then be

followed by reappraisal, in which one takes a little more time to consider the situation and assess such factors, as what may happen if one acts in various ways. For example, if the individual decides to run into the other shopper, he evaluates momentary satisfaction but then may not be able to finish his shopping. Thoughts such as these clearly influence aggression in situations, where people take the time to consider their actions and the possible results these will produce.

Finally, one’s current mood also plays an important role. Aversive (unpleasant) experiences, such as being rammed by another shopper, produce negative affect since current moods exert strong effects on ones cognitive processes. *Berkowitz* (1989, 1994), suggested, “the pain one experiences may lead towards experiencing immediate tendencies, to either retaliate or withdraw (“fight or flight”). Also the ‘mood’ may bring forth thoughts and memories related to other painful or annoying experiences. These, in turn, could trigger an aggressive reaction.

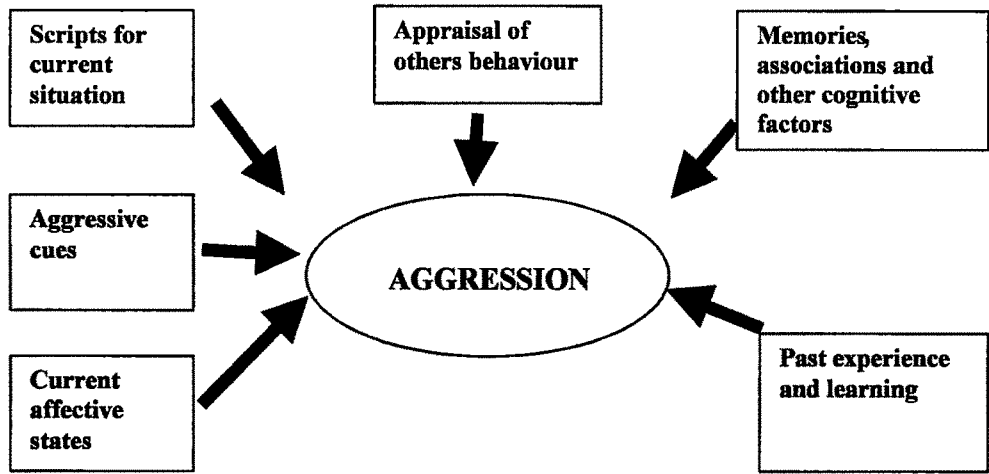


Fig. 3: Cognitive Theories of Aggression: Modern theories suggest that aggressive behaviour is influenced by complex interactions between cognitive factors (scripts, appraisals of others behaviour, memories and associations elicited by aggressive cues) [Source : Berkowitz 1989; Zillman, 1994 and others]

In sum, 'Cognitive theories' suggest aggressive behaviour as a result of a complex interplay between our current moods and experiences, the thoughts and memories these elicit, and our cognitive appraisals of the current situation as can be clearly understood from Figure 3.

1.2.8 Hightended Arousal: Emotion, Cognition and Aggression:

"Suppose, you are driving to the airport to meet a friend. On the way, another driver cuts in front of you so suddenly, that you almost have a collision. Your heart pounds wildly and you feel your blood pressure shoot through the roof; but fortunately, no accident occurs. Now you arrive at the airport. You pack and rush inside, because it's almost time for your friend's flight to arrive. When you get to the security check, there's an elderly man in front of you. As he walks through, the buzzer sounds, he becomes confused. The security guard can't make him understand to empty his pockets and walk, through again. You are irritated by this delay. Infact, you feel yourself growing extremely angry. "What's wrong with him?" You think to yourself, "Hasn't he ever been to an airport before?" As the delay continues, you feel yourself sorely tempted to shout at the elderly man or even push your way by him. *Baron* (1994)

The key question which arises, could the near miss in traffic be the reason for the sudden surge in anger? In other words, was the emotional arousal from that incident somehow transferred, to the totally unrelated situation at the security gate? The growing evidence answers the questions more assuringly (*Zillman*, 1988, 1994). It's described that under some conditions, hightened arousal – can enhance aggression in response to frustration or provocation. In various experiments arousal stemming from such diverse sources as participation in competitive games (*Christy, Gelfand and Hartmann*, 1971), vigorous exercise (*Zillman*, 1979) and even some types of music (*Rogers and Ketcher*, 1979) can facilitate subsequent aggression. A compelling and comprehensive explanation has been offered by the excitation transfer theory (*Zillman*, 1983, 1988), in this context.

1.2.9 Excitation Transfer Theory

This theory reveals physiological arousal, however produced, tends to dissipate slowly over time. As a result, some portion of such arousal may persist, as when the individual moves from one situation to another. According to the excitation transfer theory, in context with the example stated above : a portion of the arousal one experiences, as a result of a near miss in traffic jam may still be present as one approaches the security gate in the airport. When an individual encounters minor annoyance situations, the arousal previously experienced intensifies his emotional reactions. The result is that the person becomes enraged rather than just mildly irritated.

Excitation theory further suggests, such effects are most likely to occur, when the persons involved are relatively unaware about the presence of residual arousal – which is a common occurrence, since small elevations in arousal are difficult to notice (*Zillman, 1988*). Also, such effects are likely to occur when the individuals involved, recognize their residual arousal but attribute them, to the events occurring in the present situation (*Taylor et al., 1991*). For example in this case; the anger of the person, would be intensified if he recognized his feelings of arousal but attributed them to the elderly man's actions.

1.2.10 Emotion, Cognition and Aggression: The Complex Interplay Among Them

Zillman (1988, 1994) has expanded excitation theory to help explain how emotion (arousal) and cognition can interact in shaping aggressive reactions and further he has elaborated on how our thoughts can influence arousal and our tendencies to aggress? According to him, our thoughts can lead us to reappraise various emotion provoking events. For example, if persons are warned in advance, that someone with whom they will soon interact is very upset, they experience less anger in response to rudeness, by this individual than if they do not receive such information, or if they receive it only after the person has provoked them (*Zillman and Cantor, 1976*). As the main example

referred in the text, if the delay at the security gate is because the elderly gentleman is a foreigner, who cannot speak the language then the reason for confusion will be clear, and the result may well be a lower level of anger on one's part. Thus, the new information can lead to reinterpret the situation, and the cognitive activity in turn, may well influence our emotional reactions.

While viewing the impact of arousal on cognition, *Zillman* (1994) found strong emotional arousal can sometimes produce a cognitive deficit – which is the reduced ability to formulate rational plans of action, or the reduced ability to evaluate the possible outcomes of various behaviours. In other words, “When emotions run high, reason flies out of the window”. The result then may be an impulsive lashing out at others, with all the risks this implies.

1.3 THE ENVIRONMENT, INTERNAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES AND AGGRESSION

Social psychologists concentrate on the environment and psychological influences on aggression. What environment stimuli most commonly leads to aggression and how do they have their effects ?

1.3.1 Aggression as a Response to Aggression

The most obvious environmental cause of aggression is, being attacked by another. Indeed, research consistently shows people respond to attacks with counter attacks, often in a matched, reciprocal fashion. The principle that aggression begets aggression is basic to most social psychological experiments on aggression. Social psychologists, frequently have confederates attack experimental subjects to retaliate against the attackers.

The reasons that why attacks elicit counter-attacks are many: Principles of Equity and Exchange explains ‘We get, what we give’ in social relationships. Further, when attacked the individual becomes angry and aroused. This state generates hostile aggression, pain and counter attacks.

1.3.2 Physical Pain and Aggression

In bull fighting, men called 'banderilleros' thrust decorated barbs, called 'banderillas', into the shoulders and neck of the bull before the matador enters the arena. The bull – bleeding, goaded and enraged – becomes all the more ferocious. The bull fight makes use of a basic psychological principle "Pain incites aggression".

Ulrich and Azrin (1962) were the first psychologists to systematically study the nature and limits of this phenomenon. They observed when two rats were shocked in a small box with an electric floor, the animals would rear up on their hind legs and fight with each other by "boxing and biting". It was observed that pain also leads to aggression in many other animals, including monkeys, cats, opossums, raccoons, roosters, alligators and snakes.

Ulrich and Azrin initially referred to the relationship between pain and aggression as "automatic" and "reflexive". Other social psychologists, posed an interesting question about the "fighting" that follows pain. Is it truly aggressive, intended to injure another animal, or is it "defensive" behaviour designed to reduce or escape from the pain? The answer may very well be "Both", *Berokowitz (1983)*. Another research shows – A pained animal finds fighting rewarding.

It becomes questionable here; 'Does Pain Lead to Aggression in human beings as well as animals?.' Research suggests, in this regard people are like animals. People become more hostile and aggressive, when exposed to unpleasant stimuli like bad smells; cigarette smoke, disgusting pornography etc. For obvious ethical reasons, social psychologists cannot expose human subjects to painful electric shocks to see whether they will attack another person. But milder experiments show, – individuals seem motivated to hurt others, when they are in pain.

1.3.3 Heat and Aggression

Experimental studies suggest, within limits, people become aggressive as temperatures increase. This relationship sometimes breaks down when the heat becomes so oppressive that people don't have the energy to be aggressive, *Baron and Bell, 1976*.

Some studies disclose, the number of violent crimes in U.S. increases as temperature rises. Hot cities have higher rates of violent crimes than do more temperate cities (*Anderson, 1987*) and high humidity adds to the impact of heat on crime (*Harries and Stadler, 1988*). Family violence also tends to increase as temperatures rises (*Rotton and Frey, 1985*), and violent crimes are more influenced by heat than are non-violent crimes (*Anderson, 1987*).

While, on a totally different note, 'Cognitive Theories', stress on the mental schemas or setups of individuals as the causative agent of aggression.

1.4 THE MASS MEDIA AND AGGRESSION

Bandura's analysis implies, besides learning aggressive behaviour by directly observing others, people may also learn such behaviour by watching violence in T.V. shows, videos and movies. It also implies people may become less inhibited after viewing media violence.

One Research in the U.S. showed, suicide rates increase significantly after highly publicized suicides. Also individuals who attempt imitative suicides are often similar in some way to the person described in the publicized suicide.

Studies reveal, watching excessive media violence may influence viewers, long term attitudes and values about aggression and about the general levels of violence in society (*Gerbner, Gross, Signorielli and Morgan, 1980*). Social psychologists also speculate the idea about, media violence being an important means to desensitize viewers, to become less upset by actual violence. Both children and adults, who view violent T.V. programming seem to experience,

less physical arousal when they subsequently behave aggressively. On the contrary compared with people, who watch little T.V., heavy viewers of T.V. overestimate the prevalence of violence in society, the percentage of people employed in law enforcement and the possibility violence affecting them. Violent T.V. may instigate aggression in still another way. Drawing upon recent research on memory, Leonard Berkowitz (1984) has proposed that viewing T.V. violence aggravates/primes aggressive ideas and thoughts, which facilitate aggressive behaviour.

In a study conducted in U.S., it was noted that infants who were less than one year old and were exposed to more than one hour of Television each day (Hollenbeck and Salby, 1979); by early adolescence children viewed almost 4 hours daily (Libert and Sprafkin, 1988). Similarly, patterns of childhood T.V. viewing are found in other developed countries too (Murray, 1980).

Fig. 5 Television Violence and Aggression.



Laboratory experiments disclose, immediately after viewing violent T.V. shows children often behave and play, more aggressively (*Liebert and Baron, 1972*), and choose aggressive solutions to social problems.

The relationship between violent T.V. viewing and aggression seems particularly strong for boys, who strongly identify with the violent characters they see on T.V., than for girls, who prefer 'masculine' activities, and for children in general who are not socially or intellectually skilled (*Eron and Huesmann, 1986*). Also, *Huesmann (1986)* found a distinct relationship between subjects viewing violent T.V. at age 8, and their aggressiveness and level of criminal acts committed upto age 30.

Huesmann argued specific programmes viewed in childhood do not directly influence aggression during adulthood. Rather T.V. viewing exerts its effects indirectly by changing attitudes and by teaching people aggressive behaviours and aggressive styles of social interaction.

Dozens of studies have investigated the relationship between T.V. violence and children's aggressiveness. Most found consistent evidence on T.V. violence related to children's aggressiveness. In addition, the following trends have been observed :

1. The effects of viewing violent T.V. tend to increase with increase in the age of boys but decreases for girls.
2. T.V. violence encourages real life violence, particularly when it is realistic and portrayed as justified.
3. Finally, children need not be around to be affected by T.V. violence. But as research on frustration and arousal suggests, these variables can heighten the effects of media violence on children's aggressiveness.

Another aspect widely covered under "Social learning theory" is violent pornography. This theory asserts, viewers of violent pornography may learn, new forms of sexual aggression (*Byrne and Kelley, 1984*) and become

“desensitized” to sexual violence. Further, they may (falsely) learn that others derive sexual pleasure from aggression. Finally, the constant combination of sex and aggression in the mass media may lead people to cognitively associate the two, as well as classically condition sexual arousal to aggressive cues and aggressive behaviour to sexual arousal (*Malmuth, 1984*).

To summarize, the media has powerful effect upon viewers attitudes, values and behaviour. They do much more than merely mirror the society: they shape and influence it as well.

1.5 PERSONAL CAUSES OF AGGRESSION

Many psychologists have researched on the individual reasons, on why certain individuals are more aggressive than others; in their temper and actions. They have figured several personal traits or characteristics, which attribute for playing an important role :

a) TYPE ‘A’ BEHAVIOUR PATTERN

Glasser (1977) and *Strube (1989)* characterized Type A behaviour as (1) extremely competitive (2) always in hurry and (3) especially irritable and aggressive. These individuals live under constant pressure, largely of their own making. They seek recognition and advancement and take on multiple activities with deadlines to meet. Much of the time they may function well as alert, competent, efficient people who managed to get things done. However under stressful conditions they tend to become hostile, impatient, anxious and disorganized. For example, they may fume at a slow elevator or a poorly informed salesperson, who interferes with their tight schedule.

Type B individuals, are quite the opposite. They are easy going, non-competitive, placid, unflappable. They weather stress easily. In some ways, they are like the tortoise and the hare. Type B’s may be a little dull, but they are likely to live longer than the hare-like Type A’s.

Baron, Russell, and Arms, 1985; Carver and Glass, 1978 found from several experimental results, with the characteristics of Type A individuals, it seems reasonable to expect that Type A's would tend to be more aggressive than Type B's in many situations.

Some other research findings indicate, Type A's as truly hostile people: they don't merely aggress against others, as towards what could be a useful means to reach their ends/goals. Like winning athletic contests or furthering their own careers. Rather, it is seen that they are more likely than Type B's to engage in what is known as hostile aggression – aggression in which the prime objective is inflicting some kind of harm on the victim (*Strube et al; 1984*). With such characteristics, they are more engaged in actions of child abuse or spouse abuse. In contrast, Type A's have been noted as, more likely to engage in 'instrumental aggression'. The aggression a person performs not primarily to harm the victim, but to attain other goals such as control of valued resources or praise from others for behaving in a tough manner.

1.6 PERCEIVING EVIL INTENT IN OTHERS : HOSTILE ATTRIBUTIONAL BIAS

In many daily life situations, it is difficult to interpret others actions especially when the behaviour of the other person is ambiguous, and we can't determine easily, whether they mean to harm us or not. In such situations, as *Dodge et al (1986)* proposed, another personal factor known as the 'hostile attributional bias' becomes relevant. This is defined as the tendency to perceive hostile intentions or motives in other's actions, when these are ambiguous. In other words, they suggest, persons high in attributional bias rarely give others the benefit of doubt: they simply assume that any provocative actions from others are intentional, and react accordingly – often, with strong retaliation. The results of many different studies offer support, for the potential impact of this factor.

Similar results were obtained by *Dodge* and his colleagues (1990) with adolescents, where they examined the relationship between hostile attributional bias and aggression, in a group of male adolescents confined to security prison, with maximum protection for juvenile offenders. These adolescents had been convicted of a wide range of violent crimes including murder, sexual assault, kidnapping and armed robbery. The researchers hypothesized.

1. Hostile attributional bias among these youths would be related to the number of violent crimes they had committed.
2. Trained observers rating of the prisoners' tendencies to engage in aggression in response to provocation from others.

Results offered support for both predictions. In sum, it appears the tendency to perceive malice in the action of others, even when it does not really exist, is one personal characteristic closely related to high levels of aggression against others.

1.7 PERSONALITY DIMENSIONS AND AGGRESSION

Research scientists have always been interested to investigate the personality factors related to aggression. Research carried out by *Capara* et al (1994) indicates, five basic underlying dimensions of personality related to aggression cited in the table below.

Table 4 : The “Big Five” Dimensions of Personality

Dimension	Description
Extraversion	A dimension ranging from sociable, talkative, fun-loving, affectionate, adventurous at one end to retiring, sober, reserved, silent and cautious at the other.
Agreeableness (Related to Aggression)	A dimension ranging from good-natured, gentle, cooperative, trusting, and helpful at one end to irritable, ruthless, suspicious, uncooperative and headstrong at the other.
Conscientiousness	A dimension ranging from well-organized,

	careful self-disciplined, responsible and scrupulous at one end to disorganized, careless, weak willed and unscrupulous at the other.
Emotional Stability (Related to Aggression)	A dimension ranging from poised, calm, composed, and not hypochondriacal at one end to nervous, anxious, excitable and hypochondriacal at the other.
Openness to Experience	A dimension ranging from imaginative, sensitive, intellectual, and polished at one end to insensitive, crude and ruthless at the other.

Capara and his associates found several traits, including irritability (the tendency to react impulsively or rudely to even slight provocations), emotional reactivity (the tendency to over react emotionally to frustration), and rumination (the tendency to think about provocations and seek revenge for them, as being related to aggression. While these characteristics, in turn, have been found to be closely linked to two aspects of the “Big Five” dimensions of personality: agreeableness and emotional stability. It was however seen that individuals high in irritability and emotional reactivity tend to fall towards the hostile end of the agreeableness – hostility “Big Five” dimension, while those who are high in rumination tend to fall toward the unstable end of emotional stability dimension. Precisely, they concluded aggression to be related with two basic dimensions of personality – dimensions which have been found to be linked to many other aspects of social behaviour. And those related to our own experiences with highly aggressive persons Often, these persons seem to be disagreeable, suspicious, and hostile, as well as emotionally over reactive and unstable.

1.8 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN AGGRESSION

Most of us go with the basic notion, that males are more aggressive than females, though it is not based on any proof. Different research findings indicate different results in this context. Some studies have concluded, males

do report a higher incidence of many aggressive behaviours than do females. *Bogard* (1990; 1994) reported males are generally more likely to perform both aggressive actions and to serve as the target for such behaviour, though there is an exception, where sexual jealousy is concerned. Also it has been noted to differ according to situations.

Firstly, gender differences in aggression are much larger in the absence of provocation, than in its presence. In other words, males are significantly more likely than females to aggress against others, when these persons have not provoked, them in any manner. In situations where provocation is present, gender differences in aggression tend to shrink or even disappear; as reported in one finding. Also, the size – and even the direction – of gender differences in aggression has been seen to vary greatly depending on the type of aggression, which is being expressed. Thus, as seen in many cases, males are more likely than females to engage in various forms of physical aggression – hitting, punching, kicking, using weapons. While females rely more on verbal or indirect aggression where it is seldom possible to identify the aggressor or one being the target of aggression (*Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz and Kaukiainen, 1992*).

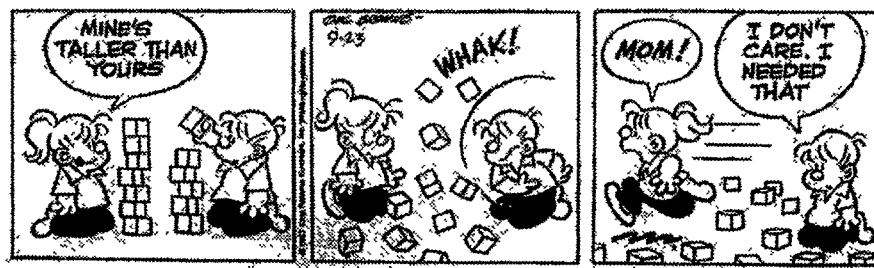


Fig 6. : Gender differences in aggression.

Even amongst children, verbal aggression includes indirect forms of aggression; like telling lies or spreading rumors behind the targets back, replacing the person as a friend with a rival, and ignoring the target person. (*Bjorkqvist et al, 1992*) indicated gender differences being present among children as young as eight, which increase through age fifteen. And they seem to persist into adulthood as well. While *Bjorkqvist, Osterman, Hjelt – Back,*

1994) found though males show increase use of indirect forms of aggression as they mature, but females still stay at a higher plane, in this respect. The simultaneous question which strikes in ones mind is why such differences actually occur ?

1.8.1 Factors Contributing To The Difference In Expression Of Aggression, In Different Genders

Most social psychologists contribute to the different ways of expressing aggression by either genders as the result of social factors – the contrasting expectations or stereotypes in a given society about what behaviour is “appropriate” for females and males. Also they offer a social-role interpretation for gender differences in aggression. According to this view, many societies expect males to be more assertive and masterful – and aggressive – than females, but also expect females to be more concerned for the well being of others than males.

Evidence indicates the Biological or Genetic factors playing role in the greater tendency of males to engage in atleast some forms of aggression. Also, males having higher level of testosterone (an important male sex hormone), have higher level of aggression. *Christiansen, Knussman (1987); Olweus (1986).*

Many different studies have reported that Biological factors may indeed play a role in gender differences in aggression. But Baron suggests, even if genetic factors play some role in gender differences in aggression, this in no way implies either that :

1. Males must show higher levels of aggression than females
2. Social factors such as gender stereotypes are unimportant in this regard.

He further states, on the contrary, gender differences in aggression like other differences, stem from a complex interplay of many different factors and are definitely, not unchangeable, where social behaviour is concerned.

1.9 ADOLESCENCE AND AGGRESSION

Adolescence is generally considered as the years between the ages of twelve and eighteen. It has been described by the psychologists' as a time of rapid development and confusion, both physically and emotionally. Cognitive development too, enters dramatic new stages. The physical changes of puberty signal the onset of sexuality; while cognitive abilities progress to the sophistication needed for mathematics and complex word use. Social relationships outside the family become much more important than before. And the growing adolescent frequently enters a stage of rebellion against parental authority. It is no wonder that this time is widely regarded as the most turbulent period of life, where 'adolescents' restlessly seek their own identity. Psychoanalyst Erik Erikson referred to this phase as "identity crisis", stage of development.

Since this is the stage, marked by turbulence, confusion, stress and changes; the pertinent question which may arise for any social psychologist doing research in the area of aggression would be : Is this also the time when aggression begins, in an individual's life? Further is it natural for an adolescent to show aggression? Does the kind or intensity of aggression change or disappear in the aging process? And finally, do some aggressions recur after they have subsided. The answer to many such queries have been searched by the investigator and have been elaborated in this section.

Professor *Leo L. Ornstein*, a leading researcher in this area points out in "The Encyclopedia of Mental Health", that aggression tends to begin at certain critical periods of life. Aggressions may make their appearance most in adolescence, the period when the young human being is struggling with many adjustment problems, a stage of upheaval and disruption of peaceful growth. And irrespective of the cultures, in which one is born; it remains as a period of stress and storm with the onset of aggressive expressions.

Ornstein explains, that it is natural for the adolescent to show aggression. The teenage child who is “always very good” or a “model child” is most likely suppressing his feelings, and not developing in the best way. As Anna Freud, a prominent Neo-Freudian puts it, “those adolescents who maintain their psychological balance during adolescence may be abnormal”. Thus, if parents can tolerate some aggression and understand that it is “healthy” rather than “naughty”, there will be fewer problems in the home. At times a very aggressive parent cannot tolerate any aggression in his teen-ager and this leads to much conflict in the child, possibly with most unfavourable consequences. Thus, it becomes important to understand the adolescent perse; comprehending in totality about his social, emotional and cognitive development. Also, understanding about his self identity, self esteem; the way he views himself and the world around him are significant. Some of these aspects have been touched here especially in regard to the problem prone adolescents.

1.9.1 Problem Prone Adolescents

Problem behavior is ordinarily defined in statistical terms; abnormal though literally means “away from” (ab-) the accepted standard. Most people agree on the extremes – for instance robbing a bank or being a heroin addict. There are “shades of grey”, though, that create debates as to whether or not particular behaviours warrant being classified as problems. Like promiscuity or incorrigibility. Though – What is considered abnormal within one context, may be quite normal with another.

1.9.2 Self Theory: Identity Diffusion

Erikson in his work with disturbed adolescents found various characteristics associated with ‘problem – proneness’ or as he terms it – ‘severe identity confusion’. He found the progress during the earlier *Eriksonian* stages influenced an adolescent efforts at identity formation. Prior failures, can lead to acute diffusion. *Erikson* (1968) has stressed the following symptoms, as indicative of severe diffusion.

a) **Time diffusion:** A sense of trust implies a realistic and optimistic view of the future. This signifies, there is time to accomplish worthwhile things and an expectation that life can always be better in the future. A sense of hope in a “better tomorrow is the theme line”.

But on the contrary, individuals characterized by time diffusion feel “hopeless”. They feel their time has passed by – “If only I was (15, 18, 21, 30 or 60) again!”, “It’s too late for me to start (go back to school, lead a decent life or whatever) again” and they tend to believe, “Things will never get any better”.

We never know for sure about things in life, but hopes, goals and an optimistic view of the future, keep the normal individual going. But, the problem – prone youth tends to assume a more negative perspective.

b) **Social Isolation:** Peer interactions and the establishment of intimate relationships are important developments during adolescence – they provide opportunities for earning status and a means for testing and revising self conceptions.

The identity confused youth has interpersonal difficulties. Authentic intimacy threatens such youth. It is as if one’s “identity” cannot withstand the communication and open honesty required in a genuine friendship. The youth, therefore, may withdraw and become an isolate or “seek intimacy with the most improbable partners” (*Erikson, 1968*). Severely diffused youth may also tend to form stereotyped and self serving relationships in many cases, with an authoritarian “leader” or “gang” which they could tell about, to others.

c) **Diffusion of Industry:** Executive competence, is the ability effectively to do and get done, the things required and valued by the society, in which one lives. Disturbed adolescents, find themselves either unable to concentrate and exert concrete effort or are overtly preoccupied, with one obsession (*Erikson, 1968*). Further, *Erikson* explains, these adolescents as being unable to assert

themselves. They have difficulties in taking risks and finding out, what one can, and cannot do. Of course failure is always possible. While the lack of effort or industry, in a sense guarantees “failure” (or a lack of success), it also provides a ‘face/saving’ rationalization. For example “If I don’t put myself on the line, no one can expect me to succeed and therefore; I can’t disappoint anyone (even myself)”.

d) **Negative Identity:** A negative identity implies, that the youth becomes something undesirable. Like the boy, whose mother constantly warns him about his, “irresponsible” father or “alcoholic” uncle or the girl whose mother “preaches” about the evils of promiscuity, may choose those identities as her own.

The history of such a choice reveals, a set of conditions, in which it is easier for the person to derive a sense of identity, out of a total identification with that which he is least supposed to be, than to struggle for a feeling of reality in acceptable roles, which are unattainable, with his inner means. The statement--- “I would rather be quite insecure than a little secure” [or] atleast in the gutter, I am a genius”, circumscribe the relief following the total choice of a negative identity (*Erikson, 1968*).

One gets the impression that labeling or expectancy effects may, at times, influence the adoption of a negative identity. The boy who gets “booked” after a joy ride in a stolen car or the youth who is “branded” following a “drug bust” encounter, may opt for those ready made identities where he emphasizes to himself, “If that’s what I am, then that’s what I will be”.

19.3 Self Theory – Alienation and Self-esteem

Alienation refers to a general state of personal powerlessness, anomie, indifference, estrangement and the like. A sense of alienation tends to characterize most disturbed youths.

Keniston (1965) suggests – several questions should be answered, whenever the concept of alienation is being considered.

First the issue of focus becomes :

1. What is the youth alienated from? What have they lost?
2. Are they alienated from their family, values, society or themselves?

Secondly – Has anything replaced, the previous loss? Are the youth, now apathetic or hostile?

1. Have the adolescents, sought meaning from peers, drugs or books?

Finally - An attempt should be made, to specify the source of alienation, and its form of expression.

1. Is the alienation self selected, or has it been imposed on youth from without?
2. In dealing with the alienation, is the youth attempting to change himself or herself (an autoplasic mode of expression) or reform the world about him or her (alloplastic)?

Diverse problem behaviours, can come under this rubric. For instance – a lower class adolescent, growing up under conditions of poverty and discrimination, may be alienated from the society and its values. The focus here lies, in the social context and where the source is from without. Replacement in such a situation may involve a delinquent gang, drugs or indifference, and the alienation may be expressed in an antisocial or self-destructive form. In contrast, a middle class youth may be alienated from his or her family or “real self”. The source of this alienation may be more inner oriented than that of the lower class youth. Naturally, the form in which alienation is manifested, and the replacements sought could be quite variable.

An external locus of control, is implied when it is referred that a youth is alienated with regard to some agent like – family, society, school, economic system, or the rest and somewhere, he or she feels powerless or ineffectual.

When normal channels are blocked or if a youth feels alienated from established institutions, abnormal or deviant behaviour seems apt to occur.

An inability to earn status and gain recognition, via normal and socially approved avenues is likely to be reflected in the negative self image of the adolescent. It is a rare youth, who does not have the need to prove himself or herself (earn status). The alienated youth's sense of powerlessness may make it extremely difficult for him or her, to develop a positive, confident self-concept. Infact, most problem behaviours tend to be associated with low self esteem.

1.9.4 Social Influences

Research is indicative, that authoritative rearing practices, have been associated with the development of mature, self governing behaviour. Conversely, one finds that overtly harsh, hostile, arbitrary or neglecting parental rearing practices, correlate with various forms of problem behaviour.

Also, nonsatellizing types of parental relations – rejecting, over indulging or excessively protective behaviours are associated with a number of characteristics like – retarded ego strength, low self esteem, opportunistic or hedonistic behaviour, identity confusion, a sense of helplessness or powerlessness and so on. Of course, not all youth who have experienced, non satellizing relationships with their parents, act in a deviant fashion. *Sutherland and Cressey* (1960) have suggested a differential association explanation, of abnormal behaviour. That is to say, delinquents or school drop outs, are more apt than normal youth, to associate with other delinquents or drop outs. Parental rearing practices may also contribute, to the youth's potential vulnerability to deviant influences. The final form of the youth's behaviour, ultimately depends, on the types of associations, she or he forms – in some cases, prosocial associations may alter the life of a youth, who would ordinarily be a likely candidate for an antisocial behaviour.

1.9.5 Cognitive Skills and Ego Strength

Theory and research on cognitive skills began with the development of modern intelligence tests, such as *Alfred Binet's* 1916 test; however, the intelligence-testing or psychometric, approach has contributed little to the understanding of an adolescent's cognitive skills. Intelligence tests are best suited to the study of individual differences or how people compare to others of their age. It is difficult to use intelligence testing to compare and contrast cognitive skills at different ages.

Research indicates however, that intelligence test scores in adolescence generally are similar to scores during childhood, although these scores may fluctuate during childhood as a function of changes in factors such as diet, socioeconomic status and education.

Psychologists approach the study of adolescent cognitive skills from three perspectives: the psychometric, the developmental, and the information processing. The psychometric approach focuses on defining and measuring intellectual skills. Psychometric research typically involves studies of performance on intelligence tests. While the developmental approach seeks to identify, the types of cognitive skills which are unique to the adolescent years. This approach, has been heavily influenced by the cognitive stage theory of swiss psychologist 'Jean Piaget'. The information – processing approach examines the characteristics of memory and problem solving. It views adolescent cognitive skills as parameters, which determine, how the brain stores and analyzes information.

David Elkind sees, the ability to think abstractly and hypothetically, enables adolescents to develop their own idealistic, theoretical views of the world. The ability to distinguish between reality and theory, however can lead to disillusionment and the recognition, that adolescents idols have "feet of clay". *Elkind* identifies three somewhat bizarre ways of thinking, that result from cognitive growth in combination with a lack of experience. In personal fable,

young adolescents see themselves, as unique and special. Personal fable, may lead adolescents to take unnecessary risks, because they believe they are so different from others: “I can drive and drive”, “Only other people get pregnant”. Personal fable also make adolescents believe, that no one else can understand, how they feel or offer any useful suggestions: “No one has ever had a problem like mine”.

In imaginary audience, adolescents believe, that “everyone” is watching them. *Elkind*, sees this self consciousness as an application of hypothetical thinking: “If my characteristics are so obvious to me, they must also be obvious, to everyone else”. In pseudo-stupidity, newly acquired cognitive skills, prove difficult to control, causing adolescents, literally to think too much and unnecessarily complicate the problem they face. As a result, they often appear “stupid”, rather than mature.

Cognitive changes also affect social behaviour by including changes in social cognitive development. ‘Social cognition’ refers to, an individual’s understanding of people and of interactions between people. According to *Piaget*, changes in cognition are reflected in the way we think about ourselves, and other people. The thinking of preadolescents (7-11 years) begins to focus less on the obvious feature of objects, events, and people. They are better able to translate patterns of behaviour into psychological characteristics, such as concluding that a person is “nice” or “rude”. They tend to become less egocentric, better able to appreciate that people have different points of view. It is not surprising then, that they are better able, to see the world, from the perspective of another person. As they enter, formal operations (11 years and older), adolescents are able to think, in more logical and abstract ways. These changes are reflected in their ability to describe people, in abstract terms, such as “cooperative” or “uncoordinated”, and compare people along psychological dimensions.

Robert Selman, has observed that changes in social cognition occur in stages, that closely parallel Piaget's stages of cognitive development. According to *Selman's* research, most concrete operational preadolescents (ages ten to twelve) recognize the existence of different points of view. Many of them, however, have difficulty evaluating conflicting perspectives or understanding, how perspectives relate to membership in different social groups. As adolescents become, more fully formal operational (twelve to fifteen years and older), they are able to understand the relationship between another person's perspective and their membership in social systems. For example, the difference between two people's point of view, may reflect their membership in different racial or ethnic groups. Progress through *Selman's* stages, also is influenced by social experiences. In other words, it is possible for a person to mature intellectually and to become less ego-centric without becoming skillful at role-taking.

Here, ego-strength, is a major factor in the employment of socially mature behaviour, involving:

1. Coping constructively with frustration.
2. Solving problems in an objective, as opposed to emotional fashion.
3. Testing reality.
4. Considering the future implications and possible consequences of various courses of action.

Ordinarily, progress is expected in cognitive development to be associated with effectiveness, in performing the aforementioned processes. But, not all "normal" adolescents attain the level of complete formal reasoning. However, there is a tendency for problem prone youth to behave in ways, indicative of extremely concrete, present oriented and inflexible thinking – they tend to be impulsive when solving problems, there is an unwillingness to delay satisfaction and so on.

1.10 CHANNELISING AGGRESSION

As mentioned earlier, due to drastic physical and mental changes, adolescents are prone to mood swings. And one of the manifestation is “aggression”. However social psychologists and researchers emphasize, that, it can be channeled into productive, useful activity, both in home and at school. Work in all its form, is a wonderful experience for the growing child. It’s been observed, that sometimes, a disturbed, overaggressive adolescent, when helped to become the member of a team; part of a bigger group would soon find, that aggression can lead to pleasure, acclaim and accomplishment. *Ornstein* explains, “understanding” is a word that is frequently misunderstood, in this context. To understand an aggressive teenager, is not the same as giving in to him, indulging him, or being afraid of him. There are parents who become afraid of their children, and the result can be extremely harmful. It would be most useful, if more educators and parents recognized, that the teenaged apparently aggressive person is seeking to be “understood” or controlled. Only then can this teenager realize, how important he is to both parent and teacher.

Further *Ornstein* explains that rigid disciplinary reactions – either strict or permissive – whether in the home or at school – which do not take into account, the needs of the individual child, can lead to more trouble. Unfortunately, there are homes where the word discipline is equated, with punitive acts. ‘Discipline’ in its broader sense, is an essential requirement in any group, small or large, and unless it prevails in the home during the earliest years of a child’s growth, he will become confused.

Some years ago, a question was put to an expert at a parents meeting at a private elementary school in Chicago by the mother of a seven year old girl. The mother, a college graduate, eager to bring up her child in accordance with scientific principles asked, “What can I do when my daughter kicks me?” This mother revealed her confusion, about basic principles of child rearing and home discipline. Most likely the little girl had already sensed her mother’s

uncertainties and was taking advantage of them. *Ornstein* stresses, some parents and teachers think, that to deny a child his wishes means to “traumatize” him. This is a gross misconception. No scientist has ever said, that the best way to bring up children is to leave them to their impulses.

On the question pertaining to whether, some aggressions recur after they have subsided. Once again, research work reviews, that ‘aggressions can recur’. Such a situation may be brought about, by sudden and unpredictable changes both in the outer life of a person and the mental processes within him. Though outwardly, it may seem to have disappeared but any sensitive, provocative situation can rekindle it.

REDUCING AGGRESSION

1.11 INTRODUCTION

The amount of hope one holds for the possibility of reducing or controlling aggression depends, to some extent, on the theory of aggression that one believes to be most accurate, as the “Encyclopedia of Mental Health,” explains. If aggressive behaviour is an integral part of the genetic make up of the human species, the out look is not nearly as promising as it is if aggression is primarily a behaviour learned from others and reinforced by certain rewards and punishments. In the former case, aggressive actions can perhaps be controlled by societal strictures, but the aggressive instinct will always remain within. In the latter case, decreasing the modeling of aggression or increasing the modeling of rewards for non aggressive behaviour could conceivably produce effective results. Different studies have produced different results concerning the effectiveness of various attempts to reduce aggressive behaviour.

Another complication in understanding and controlling aggression is that different people react very differently in similar circumstances. When frustrated, some people tend to react aggressively while others become withdrawn and depressed. Depression itself can lead to aggression, and further, this type of delayed aggression can produce seemingly unpredictable acts of violence. Psychologists simply do not have all the answers to why some people react aggressively and others do not when faced with identical predicaments. However, for those who react aggressively, techniques have been developed and proposed, to control and prevent their aggression. As the investigator noted in various books and literature related to the area, most social psychologists mainly rely on the following five strategies :

- 1) Venting aggression to reduce subsequent aggression (also known as Catharsis).
- 2) Punishing aggression.
- 3) Creating responses that are incompatible with Aggression.

- 4) Providing social restraints.
- 5) Using cognitive strategies to deal with aggression.

1.11.1 Catharsis

The concept of catharsis has emerged from Psychoanalytic theory. It is similar to abreaction, a more commonly used Psychoanalytic term that refers to, a sudden expression of a previously repressed affect. Catharsis in broader terms includes the expression of emotional impulses – the idea of a “release” being a crucial part of the concept.

The concept of catharsis is part of the “hydraulic” model of personality, which is based on the analogy to a liquid held under pressure in a container or a reservoir (*Hendricks, 1948*). Additions, in the liquid increase pressure on the walls. There are regular channels of drainage, the pressure builds up until, there is a leak in the wall of the reservoir. Each increase in the liquid adds pressure for its release. Each time there is drainage, there is at least a temporary decrement in pressure for release. Here the expression of aggression represents a draining of the reservoir, the more drained, the less that remains in the reservoir and the lesser pressure which is exerted by impulses seeking release. The expression of aggression is called “CATHARSIS” and the diminution in the tendency to aggress as a consequence of such expression of aggression is called CATHARTIC EFFECT.

When ‘Freud’ extended the notion of catharsis to aggression, he postulated that aggressive acts could sometimes “drain off” aggressive impulses, like “the reaction of an injured person to a trauma has really only..... a cathartic effect if it is expressed in an adequate reaction like revenge. The notion of ‘cathasis’ also seems consistent with common sense. People often say they need to “let off steam” or “get something off their chest”. Although, researches done in the area offer little support for the proposition that catharsis can serve as a general technique for controlling aggression. In one of the classic studies, subjects were allowed to vent their aggressive feelings towards a tormentor in one of the

three ways : through physical aggression, verbal aggression or fantasy aggression (by writing aggressive stories). Only physical aggression here, successfully reduced physiological arousal (thus providing some support for friends insight that only true revenge is satisfying).

Patterson (1974) indicates that physically “letting off steam” through sports or exercise does not serve the function of catharsis. For example he found that high school football players were more aggressive after a season of football than before it. Apparently playing football encouraged aggression rather than serving to “vent” it.

While other experimental studies expose us to the fact, that verbal aggressiveness like general physical activity does not consistently reduce subsequent aggression. On the contrary, it may even increase aggression under certain circumstances. In one of the longitudinal studies, the relationship between the verbal “venting” of aggression and actual aggression between spouses was noted. The results displayed verbal aggression encouraged rather than discouraged physical aggression. These findings were replicated in another study on 2, 143 couples where the author concluded that “for those who engage in little or no verbal aggression, there is little or no physical violence (less than half or ‘1 percent). On the other hand, “..... A clear majority of the top quarter [of married couples] who express conflicts through verbal blasts were violent.

A number of experiments suggest that people who are given an opportunity to aggress directly against someone who has angered them may actually become more aggressive subsequently and derogate as well as punish their victim.

Perhaps, the Roman, Tacitus was right when he wrote “It is part of human nature to hate, the man you have hurt”. This effect that aggressive behaviour leads to further aggression – might be a result of a number of psychological processes. When people aggress against someone, their aggression is “disinhibited”. Further more, upon aggressing successfully against a tormentor,

people learn that their aggression will not be punished and may feel the “positive reinforcement of revenge.

Finally, many reviews suggest about “dissonance theory” which predicts, that after behaving aggressively, people need to justify their bad behaviour and may do so by derogating their victim. Derogation may then lead to a vicious cycle of further aggression.

The research accounted here, does not imply that one should ‘bottle up’ his hostilities and aggressive feelings. However, the venting of inhibited feelings may be satisfying and even therapeutic (*Feshbach, 1984*). Catharsis is simply not a consistently effective method of reducing human aggression.

1.11.2 Hypnosis

‘Hypnosis’ has been used by therapists to induce variety of behaviours. Infact a few studies have attempted to induce subjects to commit antisocial acts of violence. One such study assessed post hypnotic aggression by means of the Rorschach. *Counts and Mensh (1950)* hypnotized college students and then read the following instructions. “I am going to recall something that happened to you, several weeks ago. It is now very vague in your mind and consciously you don’t remember it. However, as I recall it to you, you will picture it in your mind’s eye – how it happened and how you felt at the time. You were just getting out of your psychology class. As you were walking down the hall Dr. Mensh came rushing out of one of the rooms. He bumped into you. It was obviously his fault as he was not looking where he was going. He was walking so fast that you were almost knocked down. As you were recovering your balance and dignity, he said very sarcastically that you were very clumsy to bump into him, that if you – didn’t watch, what you were doing, he would make trouble for you. You immediately felt very angry but realized that you could say nothing. As you walked away you felt more and more angry and thought of many sarcastic things that you might have said but didn’t. When you wake up you won’t remember this event consciously, but it will be preying on

your unconscious mind. During the Rorschach test you are about to take with *Dr. Mensh* you will feel very uncomfortable and quite angry with him, but you will not know why. Nevertheless, you will be able to complete the series of 10 cards. You will dislike him very much during the procedure but you will not know why. You will feel angry with me and you will be hypnotized after the procedure, as readily as you have just been.”

After the whole procedure was over posthypnotic Rorschachs were compared with pre hypnotic Rorschachs, but only a few changes were evident. In another similar experiment, *Pattie* (1954) first hypnotized college students and told them that after coming out of the trance they would forget the responses they gave on the test. Afterwards they were again hypnotized and this time told that after coming out of the trance they would be extremely hostile and aggressive, towards the person administering the ink blot test. This suggestion was evidently effective as after this majority of subjects increased the number of aggressive responses on the Rorschach or became uncooperative (card criticism and rejection).

There are possible dangers in using hypnotism to induce or give suggestions on reducing aggression in the process. But these are minimal when the hypnotist is experienced. The main disadvantage lies in the possibility of artifacts associated with suggestion, especially when the trance is not a deep one. In addition many subjects cannot be hypnotized, which leads to a sampling bias.

1.11.3 Punishing Aggression

SHOW ME THE TEMPER !

A Zen student came to a Bankei and said :

“Master I have an ungovernable temper – how can I cure it ?”

“Show me the temper,” said Bankei, “It sounds fascinating.”

“I haven’t got it right now”, said the student,

“so I can’t show it to you.”

“Well then,” said Bankei, “Bring it to me when you have it.” “But I can bring it just when I happen to have it”, protested the student.

“It arises unexpectedly and I would surely lose it before I got it to you”.

“In that case,” said Bankei, “It cannot be part of your true nature. If it were, you could show it to me anytime. When you were born you did not have it, and your parents did not give it to you; so it must come into you from outside. I suggest that whenever it gets into you, you beat yourself with a stick until, the temper can’t stand it, and runs away.

Punishment – delivering an aversive stimulus after an undesired behaviour – is one of the most common means that societies and individuals use to control aggression. When a child behaves aggressively the most frequent response of parents is to invoke some form of punishment. In some cases of verbal admonition to behave better and in other cases, some form of physical punishment like spanking may be used. Legal systems punish violent criminals by throwing them into jail. While athletic teams, punish overly violent players by suspending them.

Sometimes punishment works. B.F. Skinner (1938), argued that punishment only temporarily suppresses a behaviour. For example a boy who is punished by his mother for hitting his little brother, may be temporarily aroused by the punishment and desist from hitting, for a while atleast. But later, when his arousal dies down he may return to his violent behaviour, particularly if his mother is not around.

Punishment may be particularly tricky as a method of controlling aggression, because punishment is itself a kind of aggression. Aggression as we know, often instigates counter aggression. Furthermore, people administering punishment act as models themselves; and their behaviour may be imitated in the future.



"This will teach you not to hit people."
Drawing by Stanley Stamaty; © 1951 The Saturday Review
Associates, Inc

Fig. 6 Punishment for controlling aggression.

Undoubtedly punishment works best to control instrumental rather than “hostile aggression”. Someone who commits a “crime of passion” may aggress despite threats of the most terrible punishment. (such as death penalty) Finally it is important to note that even though punishment may help to suppress aggressive behaviours, it does not serve to substitute aggression with more positive or productive kinds of social behaviour. At its best punishment remains as a partial solution. Also parents using a “nattering style” of parental punishment, characterized by parents, verbally nagging and fussing at their children without really focussing on specific bad behaviours constitutes the ideal way not to punish. (Baron, 1977)

In contrast the use of punishment - rewards provided for prosocial and non aggressive behaviour do tend to be effective in bringing about desired behaviour. At a basic level, children learn very early in their lives that sharing and generosity will bring them rewards of a tangible nature, such as receiving an ice cream cone for unusually helpful behaviour. Later, though the rewards tend to become less concrete, consisting of verbal praise etc. Through this process people ultimately learn that there are rewards associated with prosocial behaviour and they develop an internal morality that provides them with a sense of self satisfaction, when they have behaved in a helpful manner.

1.11.4 Creating Responses Incompatible with Aggression

Baron (1993) explains, “suppose that you were in a situation, where you felt, growing angry, and then suddenly, someone told a joke, and made you laugh. Would you remain angry ? Or would the likelihood that you’d lose your temper be reduced ? A growing body of evidence suggests that your laughter, and the positive feelings associated with it, might help to counter both anger and overt aggression. This is because it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to engage in two incompatible responses or experience two incompatible emotional states at once.

Thus, any response that is incompatible with aggression for example humour empathy or mild sexual arousal, may serve to reduce aggression (Baron, 1983). He demonstrated the ability of incompatible responses to defuse hostility, in a field experiment. Male motorists, were frustrated at an intersection, when the driver in front of them, (actually a confederate) failed to drive on when the traffic light changed from red to green. Hidden observers recorded whether the frustrated drivers honked their horns, made hand gestures or yelled out angry comments. While the drivers were stopped at the intersection. Baron arranged for three different kinds of distractions to occur : In a ‘humor’ condition a woman dressed as a clown crossed the street in front of the subjects car. In an ‘empathy’ condition, a woman on crutches crossed the street and in ‘sexual

arousal' condition a scantily clad woman crossed the street. This experiment also included two control conditions : Either no one crossed the street or a "normal conservatively dressed woman crossed the street. Subjects in the "humour", "empathy" and "sexual arousal" conditions, all showed less angry horn honking than did control subjects. These findings, and those of many other studies suggest that when angry persons are induced to experience feelings or emotions incompatible with aggression, their tendency to engage in overt aggression is often reduced. Thus, incompatible responses, too, can be a useful strategy for reducing overt aggression.

1.11.5 Providing Social Restraint

Driving along a busy highway, you see a woman on the side of the road struggling to change a flat tire. Do you stop to help her ?

According to the results of a classic experiment, the answer to this question would more likely depend on whether earlier one had passed by a man who was helping another woman, change a flat tire. If one happens to be like other subjects in the experiment, who had seen the helpful model, they would be twice as likely to stop and help than if they had not seen the model earlier (*Bryan & Test, 1967*)

The evidence is clear : viewing another person who behaves helpfully leads to increased helpfulness on the part of observers and models who exhibit non-aggressive behaviour. In contrast, if a model behaves selfishly or aggressively, observers tend to become more selfish and prone to aggression, as other studies indicate.

Prosocial and non aggressive models are effective in eliciting prosocial behaviour and reducing the incidence of aggression for several reasons. In cases in which models receive rewards for their behaviour, observers may experience a sense of being rewarded themselves, and thus may be more apt to behave in a similar fashion in the phenomenon of **vicarious reinforcement**.

Moreover, modeling goes beyond simply mimicking the behaviour of others. For instance, people can learn to construct abstract rules and principles through a process called **abstract modeling**. (Bandura, 1977). Rather, than modeling others specific behaviours, people can draw generalized principles regarding the importance of helping behaviour in situations that go beyond the one in which they initially viewed the model.

Model who behave helpfully or non-aggressively also make helping and non-aggression, more salient in a situation, helping to define the kinds of behaviour that can be considered appropriate. Finally models may help define the nature of a situation. Particularly, when events are ambiguous, the specific nature of a situation may not be apparent. By acting a particular way, a model can help clarify that help or non-aggressive behaviour is the right action.

In sum, models who behave helpfully and in a non-aggressive manner can play an important role in increasing helpful behaviour and reducing harmful behaviour. Yet, apart from the examples of a relatively few truly selfless individuals such as Gandhi or Mother Teresa', most of the news we hear and historical examples to which we are exposed present models a relatively (if unfortunately) rare happen stance.

Related to the concept of 'Modeling', comes forth, the concept of teaching or learning of such skills, called as 'Social Skills Training'. It is apparent in our everyday lives that there are many people who have the desire to be 'altruistic', or wish to communicate certain things in their social interactions, but usually do the opposite. This prevails, when they lack these required skills in their repertoire. Through means of training in social skills, one can over come these small discrepancies.

1.11.6 Social Skills Training

As the 'Dictionary of Psychology' explains in simple terms : Through social skills are any skills necessary for competent social interaction including both

language and non verbal communication. It may account for a number of techniques often involving practice, feedback, modeling and assertive training – for teaching the complex patterns of behaviours like holding conversations, dating, being interviewed etc. They have also been defined as the ability to emit both positively reinforcing behaviour towards others and to avoid emitting behaviour that involves punishment from others (*Liebert and Lewisohn, 1973*). *Phillips (1978)* defined them as the extent to which a person can communicate with others in a manner that fulfills one's rights, requirements, satisfactions or obligations to a reasonable degree without damaging the other person's rights. The concept has been synonymously used with “social competence”, “social adequacy” and even ‘Assertiveness’, though each is associated with a particular theory of social interest. *Van Hase*'s definition of social skills (1979) highlights three main elements, which are seen to be crucial: social skills are situation specific; they are acquired capacities to display appropriate responses both verbal and non verbal and they should enable people to behave in a way, which does not hurt or harm others. Continuing ambiguity as to the definition and empirical realizations of social skills means, that social skills training subsumes a huge variety of techniques, which range from Behaviour therapy to Non-directive counseling and have been aimed at widely different kinds of behaviour.

While *Trower, Bryant and Argyle (1978)* highlight social skills as a “practical procedure by means of which new forms of social behaviour can be learned or existing behaviours modified. The aim of SST is to help clients to organize or improve their social skills, namely behaviour sequences which conform to social norms and which enable people to achieve desired social goals more efficiently and acceptably. Social skills Training, has been developed and scientifically tested by many universities, hospitals and business based research teams, and has acquired variable support for its effectiveness. The training consists of instruction (description of applicable skills); modeling or demonstration by competent others imitation, rehearsal by the client. Searching

and feedback from others or from video recordings; reinforcement for achieving set standards, homework practice in a real life situation. Social skills Training is used for training psychiatric patients, as well as managers and other industrial and business personals, teachers, social workers, doctors and other professionals. It is also used for improving inter cultural communication.

1.11.7 Components of Social Skill Training

There are variety of components included in social skills training such as behaviour rehearsal, feed back, prompting, model presentation, programming of change and home work assignments. Training is often carried out in a group.

(i) Behaviour rehearsal

Many interpersonal difficulties and resultant maladaptive behaviours arise due to an individuals inability to express himself, both positively and negatively. Social Skills Training have thus been designed for a wide variety of patients in an attempt to overcome these difficulties. One of the techniques used for this purpose is 'behaviour rehearsal' wherein the client and therapist act out troublesome situations. The therapist first of all models the correct response, then the client produces that response, while the therapist provides feedback on the patients behaviour. If the patient is markedly socially unskilled a detailed analysis of his social deficits may be followed by extensive training on specific aspects of social interaction.

(ii) Social modeling techniques

Techniques designed to establish new behaviours in clients with behavioural deficits are often based on imitation, or social modeling. Although much remains unknown about social modeling procedures (which client does it help, with what problems, with which modes of presentation and so on). However researchers in this area have noted that the selected social models should be prestigious, competent, knowledgeable, attractive, and powerful. Moreover, clients, may be more influenced when the social model is similar to them in

some characteristics as the client could easily identify with the model due to similarity in characteristics.

a) Live models

Live modeling techniques (often referred to as in vivo training) have not been extensively used in any systematic manner by practitioners. Little doubt exists that therapists themselves, as well as parents and teachers, serve as models to children and adolescents. Live models have been used to illustrate certain behaviours, particularly those involving complex interpersonal situations such as interviewing for a job, engaging in a social conversation, interacting with a parent or an adult. The best live models are probably one's peers. The major limitations in using live models are : (1) controlling the model's behaviour so as to demonstrate the desired behaviour and (2) having them physically available precisely when needed.

b) Filmed models

Due to the disadvantages of using live models, the behaviour to be imitated has often been reproduced on films. Filmed models provide the observer learner with many important auditory and visual cues needed in learning the desired behaviour. The advantages of filmed models are that they can be used again and again and have flexibility and utility.

c) Audio tape

Clients can learn new behaviours by listening to others describe how they behave in certain situations, such as selecting a college, exploring occupation and the like.

d) Self modeling

In self modeling, clients themselves enact the behaviour that they wish to perpetuate. It is recorded either on audio or video tape for playback. Clients are then presented with a desirable form of their own behaviour which can serve as a model. An example of this is of a therapist who worked with a young boy who stuttered. After audio taping each interview, the therapist

edited out all stuttering leaving a stutter free record of the interview. This was played back to the client, and after ten sessions, the clients stuttering within the interview decreased to a small fraction of its original frequency.

(iii) Role playing

In Social Psychology the term “role” is used to describe the behaviour expected of an individual occupying a particular position. Like an actor acts out his role on the stage and a teacher performs a role in real life. Role playing is a very common training technique and is based on the assumption that the process of acting out a role will enable an individual to gain insight (Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology and Education). It can be especially useful in solving interpersonal difficulties and has its application in increasing awareness about oneself and others and in setting goals as well as in action planing.

The principal value of role playing is that it can bring into the present, events that have happened in the past or events that are anticipated by the client as possible future encounters. Role playing can be set up in various ways. Often the therapist can play one party to a conflict, perhaps a sibling, spouse, or parent of the client while the client plays ‘him’ or ‘herself’ . The therapist can also play the client, freeing the client to play the role of the other party. Or, with use of an empty chair, the client may take on both roles him or herself, while the significant other changes chairs between responses, delivering both person’s lines.

Setting up the role play is an important part of the process. After carefully explaining, how role playing might help, the therapist may find it useful to give the client the role of the drama director. That is, the client decides (with help of the therapists) who plays which role, instructs the therapist on the characteristics of the person he or she is playing, and decides how to play his or her own role. It is important here, to clarify the details about the settings from the client, to achieve as much authenticity as possible. It may be useful to have several “rehearsals” to get all the details right and to portray personalities

accurately. The rehearsals themselves deepen the clients understandings of the parties involved, while at the same time they inform the therapist.

During the role playing, the counselor has several tasks : to play his or her own role accurately, to pay close attention to the client's behaviour and emotions and to pay close attention to his or her own inner experiencing. When the role playing is completed, the client and therapist discuss what had occurred. The therapist has a rich supply of information from the experience to offer as feedback to the client. The information can come from within him – or herself and be offered as immediacy communication (As I played your wife I wanted to hear your ideas but was feeling low and was hurt that you did not see me as equal to you.) or from observations of the client (“As I asserted my ideas your muscles seemed to freeze”). The feedback helps the client clarify emotions, desires, beliefs about the other person beliefs about him or herself, and the impact of his or her behaviours. These new insights serve as the basis for developing action strategies. The concept of role playing has been illustrated here, through a case study mentioned below.

Case Study : Jack and Eve were a married couple in their mid thirties who had been married eight years. Their one child Tommy, was six years old. They came for counseling because, as Eve described it “Our family is not a healthy place to live”. Their relationship was characterized by disagreements over money, role assignments, and parenting practices . Jack felt stress at work and was short tempered at home. Eve was primarily responsible for child care, managed the household affairs, and was not employed outside home.

In one session a recent episode in which Jack had yelled at Tommy was the focus of counseling. A role playing session was established in which the counselor played the role of Tommy. The situation was as follows : Jack came home from work to find Tommy's room a mess. He shouted loudly for Tommy to come to his room immediately. Slowly and apprehensively, Tommy approached his room. Once Tommy was there Jack proceeded to “read him the

riot act". In the midst of Jack's violent verbal attack "Tommy (the counsellor) suddenly shut his eyes, held his hands over his ears, turned around, ran away and hid under a piece of furniture in the next room. The infuriated Jack, demanded in a loud voice, "Tommy come back". In a quacking voice Tommy said, "No, I am afraid you might kill me."

The role play ended. Jack was visibly shaken and waved his hand to stop the action. He sat down and held his head in his hands. He repeated several times, "I just never realized how frightening I am when angry. "After a while the counselor asked Eve about her reactions to Jack's anger. Her statement, "Just like Tommy's. It terrifies me, too," validated the feedback.

Until this experience Jack had not taken seriously the effects of his own anger on other rationalizing it away, disowning it, and arguing that other family member had to learn to accept his anger. The role playing situation in which the counselor deliberately did what he thought Tommy wanted to do but was afraid to do, helped Jack see and experience the effects of his anger. In a later session there was a follow up exploration of what Jack would lose by controlling his anger. This discussion led to discoveries related to his fear of losing power, fear of being the underdog, and the use of anger to intimidate. Over time, these insights seemed to help Jack reduce his expressed anger, show more patience, and express affection more easily.

(iv) Artificial lab situations of aggression and role playing

The technique of 'insult' (as a form of aggression) attempts to solve the artificiality problem by making the attack appear to be an incidental unrelated aspect of laboratory situation. The role playing approach on the other hand accepts the artificiality admitting openly that the situation is unreal. The expectation is that the subject will become caught up in the situation so that the play acting will have elements of realistic, non laboratory behaviour embedded in it. To the extent that the assumption is true (and it seems to hold in the therapeutic use of psychodrama), role playing is an effective means of studying

aggression in the lab. Two studies mentioned below illustrate this technique. Harris et al (1953) had college women act out two situations :

The subject was instructed that she was a college student, that she was going to a dance that evening, and was to pick up an evening gown which she had left at the dry cleaner shop. In the experimental room on a slightly raised platform, she was met by a staff member who played the role of a proprietor. He informed her, that her gown was not ready and neither was it in the shop. He met her every question or demand with stubborn indifference. In the second psychodrama the 'S' was instructed that a number of fellow students had asked her to call on the dean of women of the college to request that an examination be postponed. She was also told that the dean was an old friend of her mother. The dean was played by a professional actress with considerable skill and versatility. She met the student initially with warm acceptance and then became critical and personally attacking and rejecting. In both situations there was considerable verbal aggression. *Buss and Foliart (1959)* had college men and women act out the following situation :

"We are two acquaintances. I have been gossiping about you, talking behind your back. I called you a hothead and a cheat and said that you were completely dishonest and utterly unreliable. You heard about this and since of course it is not true, you are very angry. Now you are confronting me."

Both techniques had their advantages. The technique used by Harris et al guaranteed more involvement by the subject because he was attacked or frustrated during the course of the role playing. On the other hand, the subject might recognize the attack or frustration as deliberate and part of the experiment. The technique used by *Buss and Foliart* does not involve the subject as much, because his role playing of anger is solely based on instructions, but there is no problem of the subject discovering any artifacts. Both techniques have one obvious limitation. To the extent that the subject can bifurcate the role playing situation from real life, he will simply follow another

laboratory set and go through the motions of verbal aggression. If the number of subjects who remain uninvolved can be held down, role playing can prove as a useful technique for studying aggression.

(v) Feedback

Positive feedback is offered to the client following each rehearsal. The positive aspects of the clients performance, are carefully taken note of and appreciated. Even small improvements are noted and approximations to final behaviours are reinforced. The client is trained in learning responses that are as positive as possible. It follows that, such behaviours are more likely to be effective, as they are less likely to result in negative escalation of exchanges including discomfort in the client.

(vi) Prompting

Directions or signals can be used to prompt a response. Either before or during the rehearsals and model presentations, the prompting signals may be employed. Even hand signals are used in rehearsal. Their advantage is that the scene is continued while coaching is provided in relation to specific behaviours. If on the other hand reciprocal role is being played by the counselor, such prompts may become more difficult to give unless their precise meaning is arranged before hand. Prompts are gradually faded out as client picks up the skill more and more.

(vii) Programming of change

This involves establishing specific goals for each session. In each session, the focus is on one or two non verbal behaviours. Assessment of the clients behaviour in relation to given situations reveals the behaviour he already possesses and training is build on these. Thus goals are established for each client during each session. Reinforcement for improvement is always in relation to the clients past performance rather than in terms of comparisons with other individuals. Even small positive changes are noted and appreciated.

This enables the client to change his own behaviour based on a model of his own.

Hierarchies ranked in terms of the degree of anxiety or anger that situations induce can be employed to gradually establish new skills. Rehearsal begins with situations inducing a small degree of anger or anxiety and once these are mastered, higher level scenes are reintroduced. Scenes are carefully programmed according to the skill and comfort level of the client. If the client is too uncomfortable to engage in role playing a script may be offered and responses may be read from it instead of asking the client to enact the role. Later on as comfort level increases, role plays are introduced.

(viii) Home work assignments

After the client has acquired required skill and comfort levels, next step are the assignments mutually agreed on which the client tries to execute in his natural environment. Here, prior preparation is very essential if negative reactions are anticipated. To avoid the possibilities of negative outcomes, the counselor should have an adequate understanding of various relationships in which the assertive behaviour is proposed. The behaviour of significant others may change only slowly and more effective behaviour may initially create even more negative feelings and actions. Ideally, significant others are also involved in the counseling process so that they may facilitate change efforts. Always, however this may not be possible.

Homework assignment cards may help to prompt completion of objectives. These indicate the date when the assignment was given, description of the assignment, when it is to be completed and when it got date completed.

A careful check is made at the next meeting to find out what happened. Information reviewed includes what was said and done, when it was said and done; how the client felt before, during and after the interaction, whether self reinforcement was provided for trying to influence one's social environment even though the attempt might have failed and what response occurred

following the clients behaviour. Feedback and reinforcement are offered for appropriate behaviours and additional instructions are given if necessary. And further assignments are agreed upon.

1.12 USES OF SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING

Through the means of social skills training :

- 1) A social behaviour like withdrawal, moodiness may be modified into socially well adjusted behaviour.
- 2) Social anxiety which is the backbone of stage fear, xenophobia, under-achievement in interviews, etc. can be reduced, if not totally alleviated.
- 3) Social skills training helps the individual in shedding antisocial tendencies.
- 4) Prosocial behaviour can get developed and strengthened.
- 5) Interpersonal relationships can be improved.
- 6) Communication can become effective and successful.
- 7) Cognitions pertaining to the process of socialization become rational and healthy.

As it is precisely transparent – Behaviour Rehearsal, Modeling, Role playing; all have their roots embedded in the process of learning and imitation. Closely related are moral values which too are governed by the same process and require the requisite skills to be attained.

1.13 VALUES AND AGGRESSION

1.13.1 Learning Moral Behaviour

When schools or ‘Gurukuls’ were first formally organized in India, their dominant goal was to communicate and teach moral values. Although this goal has largely been forgotten except in religiously oriented education. There are several techniques that have been proposed and used for enhancing moral behaviour. Two of these mentionable techniques are : value clarification and

the enhancement of moral reasoning. These techniques have been designed to overcome the limitations of moral admonitions.

i) Value clarification

In values clarification, the goal is not so much to promote a particular brand of morality, but rather to encourage an examination and increased understanding of the values that a person holds. It is assumed that by clarifying a persons existing values, gaps and contradictions that exist would become more explicit, leading people to adopt moral values that are more beneficial to them and society. To do this people being trained in values clarification, participate in a series of exercises that are designed to make them aware of their own values and the relationship among them.

ii) Enhancing Moral Reasoning

In enhancing moral reasoning, people are directly taught to reason about moral issues in a more sophisticated manner than their current approach Based on Kohlbergs model of the development of moral reasoning (this method includes the presentation of moral dilemmas the creation of conflict and attempts to make people more aware of others perspectives in order to teach that moral issues involve many points of view that must be weighed simultaneously. (*Hersh, Paslitto and Iumer, 1979*).

Examination of the effectiveness of values clarification and moral reasoning enhancement has shown that they are both effective in doing what they set out to do: People become more aware of their values, and their level of moral reasoning increases. However, it is less clear that they promote actual changes in moral behaviour, as opposed to changing the way they think about morality (*Kaplan, 1983*). Still enhancing the clarity of people's values and making their moral judgements more sophisticated and clearly the first, and most necessary steps in making them more likely to behave prosocially and non aggressively.

1.13.2 Moral Admonitions

Research has shown that those who preach generosity are far less effective in eliciting charitable behaviour from observers than those who actually behave generously (*Grusec & Skubiski 1970*). Even when preaching is effective, broad generalizations of the type that parents and other models are apt to impart (its good to help others in any way you can) have been shown to be less effective than more specific admonitions (it's good to donate money to these specific poor people (*Grusec, Kuczynski, Rushton & Simutis 1978*)).

Research also suggests that merely telling people to be helpful and leading them to think about the importance of helpfulness is a relatively ineffective strategy for producing increases in pro-social behaviour. Moreover, there is no evidence that admonishing people to be less aggressive is any more effective in producing declines in aggression than in admonishing them to become more helpful. More direct means of evoking pro-social behaviour and reducing aggression, then are necessary.

1.14 COGNITIVE STRATEGIES FOR CONTROLLING AGGRESSION

1.14.1 Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

The cognitive behavioral approaches are derived from a variety of perspectives, including cognitive theory, classical and operant conditioning approaches, problem solving theory, and developmental theory. All these approaches share the perspective that internal cognitive processes, called 'thinking' or 'cognition' effect behaviour and that behaviour change may be effected through cognitive change.

Remarkably, these approaches have several other similarities. One is they all see therapy as time limited. This is in sharp distinction, to the traditional psycho- analytic therapies, which are generally open-ended. The cognitive behaviour therapies attempt to effect change rapidly; often with specific, preset

lengths of therapeutic contact. Another similarity among the cognitive behaviour therapies is their target of change is also limited. For example, in the treatment of depression, the target of change are the symptoms of depression. Finally, in these approaches to treatment, one sees a time limited focus and a limited target of change.

1.14.2 Fundamental of Cognitive Learning Perspective

Misra (1992) summarized the fundamentals of cognitive learning perspective.

According to him:

1. The human organism responds to cognitive representation, of his environment rather than to the environment
2. These cognitive representations are functionally, related to the progress and parameters of learning.
3. Most of the human learning is cognitively mediated.
4. Thoughts, feelings and behaviour are casually interactive.

Therefore, therapies are geared towards individual's cognition. While Goals are structured to modify the individuals feeling and thoughts.

Cognitive behaviour modification is different from psychoanalysis and dynamic psychotherapy, as it does not give importance to childhood experience or to sexuality or unconscious process.

Bandura's social learning and vicarious processes, Schachter's attributional cognition, Albert Ellis's rational emotive therapy, Beck's cognitive restructuring, Michenbaum's self talk have very much contributed to the growth of cognitive behaviour modification.

Cognitive behaviour therapies are broadly divided into three categories mentioned below:

- i) Cognitive restructuring
- ii) Coping skills training
- iii) Problem solving therapies

In the present research cognitive, restructuring technique of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy has been utilized as part of the intervention programme. The investigator has therefore elaborated the framework and process of this therapy below :

1.14.3 Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy

The ability of our thoughts to affect our lives negatively has been stressed for many years by *Ellis* (1962). He has specifically emphasized training the client to identify irrational cognitions and to re-evaluate them in more realistic terms. Ellis, has labeled his system “Rational Emotive Therapy”, (RET) which *Goldfried* (1974) have placed in a behavioural framework.

This approach is based on the idea, that irrational beliefs produce irrational behaviours (*Ellis, et al*, 1989). It follows, if people are taught to think more rationally, their behaviour will become less irrational and their emotional problems will get reduced. Some of the irrational beliefs have been listed in the forth coming section.

1.14.4 Some Widespread Irrational Beliefs

Some common irrational beliefs, according to Ellis, include as summarized here:

1. In adult human, must be loved or approved by almost everyone.
2. In order to feel worthwhile, a person must be competent in all possible respects.
3. When things are not the way you want them to be, it is a catastrophe.
4. People have little or no control over the external causes of the bad things that happen to them.
5. The best way to handle a dangerous or fear producing event is to worry about it and dwell on it.
6. It is easier to avoid certain life difficulties and responsibilities, than to face them.

7. One needs to depend on others and to rely on someone stronger than oneself.
8. One's present behaviour is determined primarily by one's past history.
9. One should be upset by the problem of others.
10. There is always a perfect solution to a human problem, and it is essential to find it.

Ellis explains, the above mentioned beliefs are irrational in the sense, that they do not accurately represent the individuals real world. Reacting to situations on the basis of such irrational beliefs can produce ineffective behaviour and maladaptive emotions like anxiety and depression. Irrational beliefs may be revised by rational re-structuring, as when the person who believes, she must be loved by everybody, rethinks this potentially, debilitating attitude and realizes its impossibility.

Thus the **Basic Theory of REBT** outlines:

1. Outside events or people do not cause our feelings.
2. Our beliefs (interpretations and evaluations about events or people) cause our feelings.
3. By changing our beliefs, we can change our feelings and therefore our behaviour.

Individuals in situations like these require to restructure their rational beliefs and pose the alternative rational beliefs, like :

1. I strongly wish to be outstanding, successful, loved and approved. I specially want this from those close to me and at work. However, there is no reason, why this has to be, as I want. Not getting what I want can be disappointing. I may even fail to achieve most of the things I want such failure is not the end of the world, for me and I can still accept myself, believe in my worth, be happy and pursue my goals a new.

2. I certainly prefer that other treat me, fairly and with kindness. However, I don't need it. I can choose to be fair, even if I am not treated fairly. Even more, I do not need to see others pay for their poor behaviour towards me and I can bear it if they do not respond the way I expect them to.
3. I prefer to experience pleasure, rather than pain but there is no reason, why this has to be the case. Even if I have to bear more pain/discomfort, to achieve my goals than I would like to, this is not awful, horrible or unbearable and life is still worthwhile.

1.14.5 How Does REBT Work

Searching the skeleton network, it is observed that the essence of REBT is expressed in A-B-C-D-E paradigms given by *Ellis*. They are defined by him as:

A = Activating Experience - An objective occurrence of an event to which the individual is exposed.

B = Belief – This refers to the belief system which incorporates the chain of thoughts or verbalizations arising from A.

C = Consequences – The emotions and behaviours resulting from B.

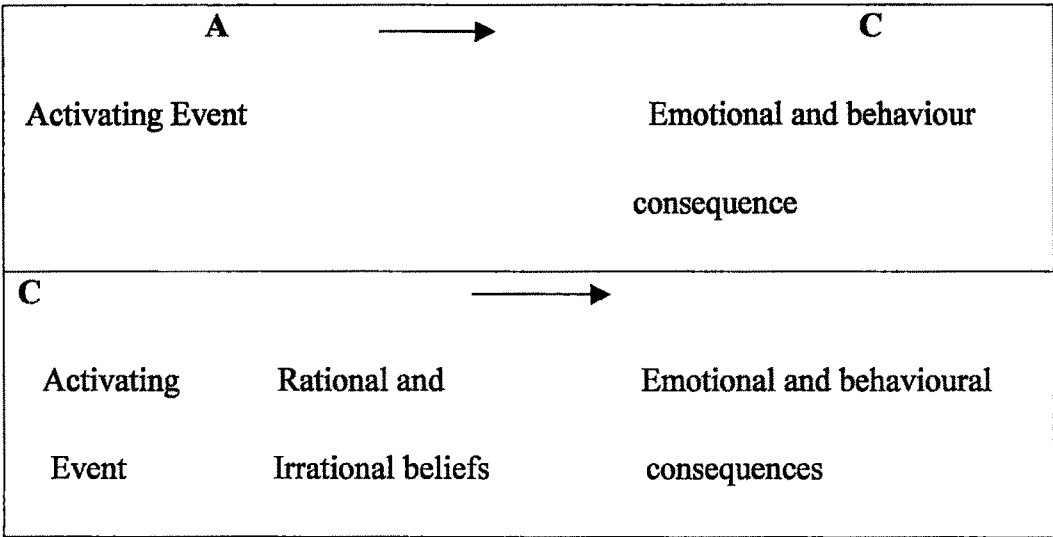
D = Disputing – Debating, discriminating and defining the rational and Irrational thoughts.

E = Effect – Experiencing the positive emotions following D.

Ellis explains, that most people go by the popular misconception, that an activating event 'A' (unpleasant, discomfoting event) produced 'C' (a consequence – resulting in emotional and behavioural reaction (like anger, - anxiety (as shown in figure below). But REBT views; 'A', the external event is filtered by our own perception. How we react to any event, is our choice. We hold the wires in our hand, in the form of our beliefs which inturn decide our emotional and behavioural reaction at 'C'.

Table 5 : The REBT frame work

THE ABC's OF REBT



The most important element, in the therapy remains ‘B’ our belief system, constituting of rational and irrational beliefs. So it becomes vital to understand, what these rational and irrational beliefs are.

Rational Beliefs: Ellis has explained, almost all of us have strong sets of rational beliefs, which we use, to control and direct our behaviour. Our cooperative interaction with other people along with our personal conduct in relation, to the objects we encounter – in our everyday lives, testifies – we all have rational beliefs. These rational beliefs are learned from our elders, which vary greatly throughout history and from culture to culture.

Belief System: Constitute processes, in which many factors interact. Everytime something happens at ‘A’ (activating experience), the individual responds to the situation in one of the two modes: ‘Rationally’ or ‘Irrationally’. Ones usual reaction is a combination of both modes. But, the individual can sometimes affect his actions more by one mode, than another. For example: the person may totally ignore, the rational beliefs and respond to the situation, on a purely

irrational level. The concept has been explained below through some everyday happenings.

For example: ‘You had promised to share an apartment, with your friend and share the rent, provided you fix up and furnish the place. This seemed agreeable to both. You go through a good deal of trouble and personal expenses to keep your part of the bargain. At the last minute, your friend informs you, that he has made other plans and would not keep his part of the agreement. You feel extremely angry with him, not only did you go through considerable expense to keep your part of the agreement, but you experienced great inconvenience, at the last minute to look for another room-mate.

You decide to confront your friend and share your feelings. You tell him, “Look here”, “I won’t have you treating me like this! After all, you did say you’d share the apartment with me, after I had fixed it up and furnished it. I never would have done that, had you not agreed to share it with me, in the first place. You have clearly done me wrong, and acted really rottenly. How could you have done a thing like that to a friend? I’ve never done anything so nasty to you, and I really don’t see how you can expect any one’s friendship – if you treat people so terribly.

Thus in a situation like this, the individual tends to say to himself :

- What a bad thing he has done to me.
- How terrible of him to treat me, in such a shoddy and inconsiderate manner!

‘Ellis’ explains such statements, which an individual makes to himself seem very appropriate and reasonable. Closer examination discloses, though the individual is expressing only one idea but infact has two ideas in his mind:

- 1) What a bad thing he has done to me
 - a) He has seriously frustrated my plans.
 - b) His actions, have greatly inconvenienced me and have placed me in a difficult situation.

- 2) How terrible of him, to treat me, in such a shoddy and inconsiderate manner. The individual views, the other persons actions as terrible and there and then he winds up with this irrational belief.

Thus, the idea of thinking of an event to be horrible/terrible; may do good deal of damage to our goals and happiness. Because in such situations we equate unfairness or injustice with ‘Horror’ and fail to distinguish, the two. This is, because, people have relatively limited number of emotions, which they experience and these feelings fall into, two major subheadings – ‘Good or bad’, ‘Right or wrong’, depending on our belief system. And certain thoughts, connect to certain emotions. People teach themselves to use these thoughts, to evoke emotions. Thus, we find that a strong interaction between thinking and feelings exist. Hence, here our irrational beliefs, take precedent over rational beliefs. And because of this, we do not try to see the fully reality behind the Activating experience. And by not seeing so, we can naturally act in a self destructive manner.

RET believes, unless we have the awareness of and ability to change our irrational beliefs, we continue to have difficult problems, in dealing with our anger and self defeating emotions. RET also believes, by changing our feelings at C, we can learn to change our behaviour.

Thus, irrational beliefs and thinking, produces only conflicts in our lives'and in our relationship with others. While on the contrary, Rational thinking outlines, the following criteria, as *Ellis* states:

Table 6 : Criteria For Rational Thinking

Criteria for rational thinking:
1. Rational thinking is based on obvious fact.
2. Rational thinking best helps you to protect your life and health.
3. Rational thinking best helps you achieve your short term and long Term goals.
4. Rational thinking best helps you avoid your most undesirable conflicts with other people.
5. Rational thinking best helps you feel the emotions you want to feel.

1.14.6 Aggression and REBT

Psychologists tell, that if the individual does not prepare to fight for, what he desires; he can only have the alternative of remaining passive and silent, when others take advantage of and prevent him from achieving his goals. He reviews most authorities today generally leave with one or two alternatives of dealing with anger:

- a) Feel the anger, but sit on it, squelch it, deny and repress it.
- b) Feel the anger and freely express it.

Let's examine different situations, when we:

- a) **Deny Anger:** Squelching anger, unexpressed rage will do more harm, than frankly and freely expressed feelings. As the Hydraulic Theory, states – Anger and other emotions, have a tendency to increase under pressure like steam in a kettle. If, the emotions are squelched and not given free vent, then the individual can run the risk of doing, some real physical harm to himself. Harm like high blood pressure, stomach ulcers, or get gripped by more severe psychosomatic reactions.
- b) **Bottling Anger/Penting Anger:** Keeping feelings pent up inside, also do not help to lose anger. While on the contrary, the individual may in all probability feel much worse. As the anger doesn't go away, but stays right in there, in the "gut".
- c) **Expressing Anger:** If you let yourself feel authentically angry and let others know about your feelings, people receive, your free expression of anger, in most instances – as an outwardly aggressive or hostile action, and will probably close themselves off from you and inturn defensively respond to you, with further hostility.
- d) **Criticizing:** If we pass critical comments with deep seated aggression in us the other individual experience pain, guilt which frequently attempt to establish, a similar set of feelings for us in oneself.
- e) **Creative Aggression/Constructive Anger:** Some other set of therapists, have attempted to resolve the problem, with yet another alternative of

expressing oneself more controllably and hoping that others will willingly listen to your point of view. In such a case, though – we may keep our feelings of anger (pent up) inside. But since those feelings are there, unexpressed – the underlying resentment greatly interferes with our relationship. So finally, nothing gets resolved. The seething anger interferes, with many of the other activities as well and such a solution also, does not work out.

Evaluating, all these techniques, we find holding anger and not expressing it, is a poor idea. Creative aggression, seems a workable solution, but still creates same problems. Christian forgiveness involves turning the other cheek. Where, you may behave beautifully but that does not mean, that others will respect you and treat you, as you treat them.

None of these approaches, can be effectively implemented, as each has many serious and destructive drawbacks, in its practical application. The question here arises – What is then actually required? The individual requires a formula, which will allow him to deal with difficult situations and get, what they want; without damaging their own integrity or anger and hostile feelings in others. REBT, is one such tool. As it seeks solutions to deal with all our problems, in a realistic manner; with the special emphasis, on becoming self-dependent and not having a need to depend on the therapist later.

It has been identified here how REBT could be successful, in using with aggressive, angry individuals. The steps involved would be as follows:

- 1) Firstly, Locating 'C': the emotional/behavioral consequence – which here would account for our anger or resulting anxiety.
- 2) Activating Event: Secondly, we try to identify the activating experience, (A) which produced 'anger' Though it appears, that A causes C. But RET theory assumes – although the activating event, directly contributes to the emotional consequence but it does not really cause it. Between 'A' and 'C', the individual carries his intermediate thought process. This constitutes, a process of evaluation in which he makes a decision, which determines his

response. And it is true that the individual, seldom gives much thought, to his thought processes. Therefore, we rarely makes himself aware of the influence, his thoughts have upon our actions and reactions, in various situations.

Since the individual has choices and control over his responses to every situation, his feelings and individual responses, often remain much more, within his control, than he realizes at the time.

By determining the intermediate, negative thought pattern, the person can:

- a) Minimize the possibility of frustrating impulsive behaviour, which could complicate his growth and progress.
- b) There would be better chances or making appropriate choices; which further could increase the likelihood to attain our ones goals.

Elaborating the intermediate thought process, it stands for ones belief system. And while, 'B' plays a major role in determining 'C', 'A' too has some degree of influence. Thus, $C = A+B$.

The REBT process explains, every action, the individual make follows a series of thoughts. No matter, how spontaneous, these actions or reactions appear, they come forth because of something. This something is nothing more than ones system of beliefs encompassing his rational and irrational thoughts. Irrational belief system, which contribute to our negative thought patterns, results into anger. By discovering these irrational beliefs, the individual can try to challenge altering them. This is where the factor 'D' as one of the components of REBT baseline evolves. 'D', one of the most important part, in the REBT theory, represents 'DISPUTING'. After having clearly acknowledged our irrational beliefs – 'D' is then the point, where the individual tries to dispute these irrational beliefs. Kishore Phadke, a leading REBT therapist of India, has broken 'D' into three components: 'Detection', 'Discrimination' and 'Debating'

Disputing, largely consists of detecting ones irrational beliefs, discriminating them clearly from his rational beliefs and further debating these ‘beliefs’ actively. The important element here is, to first consider ones irrational beliefs.

‘Anger’ as this therapy explains stems, from carrying things further and viewing the situation as ‘awful’, ‘terrible’ or ‘horrible’. The tendency here, is to equate unfair, inconvenient or disadvantageous with awful. But, these terms do not mean awful, It is seen that the individual creates his anger by the emotional idea he attach to the term ‘awful’. Awful, leads to the idea that the action has more than badness, that it must not exist. So do the words, like horrible, terrible, awful imply, similar concepts:

Table 7: Differences between Appropriate and Inappropriate Feelings

Inappropriate/Self Destructive Feelings	Appropriate/Non-Defeating Feelings
1. Anger Feelings of resentment, anger, Madness, fury, rage.	Irritation Feelings of (mild or intense) irritation, displeasure, annoyance, frustration, anger at people’s act but not at the person.
2. Self-Criticism Feelings of humiliation, shame, Embarrassment, inadequacy, dis-counting self as a person	Criticism of One’s Behaviour Feelings of (mild or intense) regret, sorrow, displeasure, doubt, criticism of one’s behaviour but not of one’s total self
3. Anxiety Feelings of anxiety, nervousness . panic, helplessness, horror, hyper-tension	Concern Feelings of (mild or intense) concern, caution, vigilance, tension about one’s own performance but not about one’s self.
4. Depression Feelings of depression, worth- lessness, undeservingness, guilt, self-downing.	Sadness Feelings of (mild or intense) sadness, sorrow, regret, discouragement, displeasure. Feelings that one is a person, who has performed badly but is not a bad person.

The process of 'D' incorporates asking questions from oneself, which challenge one's irrational beliefs. Asking questions like, why, how? What evidence exists for this? Where can I find the proof? Thus, also asking oneself; why or in what manner can't I stand such unfair treatment. Given below is a chart, for 'Emotion Control'. It specifies on the right side the consequence or inappropriate destructive feelings emerging from Irrational beliefs. While the left side of the chart shows 'Appropriate', 'Nondefeating' feelings occurring as a result of a Rational belief system.

1.15 PSYCHIATRY AND AGGRESSION

1.15.1 Biological Factors in The Control of Aggression

- a) **Brain Mechanisms :** The limbic system, is phylogenetically very old part of the brain. It includes a number of areas including the hypothalamus, amygdala and hippocampus. The system, also called as the papez circuit; is like a circular track with connections in and out to other areas. *Kluver* and *Bucy* (1937) removed the temporal lobes of rhesus monkeys, consisting primarily of the hippocampus and amygdala. The animal became excessively oral (taking anything into their mouths), hypersexual, very passive and seemed not to remember things very well. With the development of refined electrode stimulation and ablation techniques, as well as more information about the anatomy of the brain, it is found that amygdala, septum and hippocampus are particularly important for aggression. However, a directed attack requires both the sensory and motor apparatus for directing the attack.
- b) **Psychosurgery :** The term "psychosurgery" refers to brain operations intended to change the patient's behaviour or feelings, "Frontal lobotomy", is the separation of the frontal lobes of the brain from the rest of the brain. *Jacobsen* (1935) reported, if prefrontal cortex of monkeys was removed, they became gentle, but had problem in solving problems involving short-term – memory (STM).

Furthermore, in the early reports, the effectiveness of lobotomy, particularly of reducing irrational fears, anxiety and obsessional behaviour were overstated. The use of drugs has now obviated the demand for such surgery and psychosurgery is restricted to more limited neural structures.

Some patients, however do have uncontrollable rages often related to epileptic seizures that can be traced to a particular abnormality in the brain. Scar tissue, for example, is a common focal point of origin for the onset of a seizure. One technique is to implant many electrodes in the brain, to locate the source of seizure. The offending area can then be destroyed by very small localized lesions, made through the same electrode, that detected the abnormality. This also prevents gross impairments that accompany lobotomy.

- c) **Genetics** : Human beings genetically have either a pair of X (female) sex chromosome or one X and one Y (male) chromosome. The individual with XX chromosomes becomes a female, and the individual with XY chromosomes becomes, a male. Occasionally, there are genetic errors. In “super males” there is an extra Y chromosome, so that the individual is XYY. Some initial researchers indicated, an unusually high number of XYY individuals in prison and the hypothesis quickly developed that this “supermale” was genetically more aggressive. The behavioural problem, incidentally is said to be not so much that the individual is aggressive in a destructive sense, but rather is unable to control his impulses. Thus, he seeks immediate gratification of his desires and this sometimes leads to violence, if he is interfered with. However, no evidence has been found, that men with XYY or even XXY (with extra X chromosome) are especially aggressive. They do not appear to be contributing particularly to society’s problem with aggressive crimes, and therefore identifying them would not reduce the crime problem. So, what began as a reasonable hypothesis – failed to gain any statistical support.

d) Sex Differences, Hormones and Aggression : At birth, all mammalian brain appear to be “female” dominated by the hormones estrogen and progesterone. Much behaviour of males, at early ages is like that of females. Generally, the most critical experiments on sex hormones use the technique of castration and hormone replacement therapy. A castrated male (like a gelding horse or a steer) is much less violent and much less dominant in its group, than is an uncastrated animal. Injections of testosterone, however restore the aggressive behaviours. It has also been noted that many normally peaceful wild male animals become violent during mating season, when their sex hormones are at their highest level, then become relatively placid again, when the mating season is over. The female sex hormones – estrogen and progesterone, on the other hand, tend to inhibit aggressive behaviours.

There is also reported a disproportionate incidence of irritability and antisocial behaviour of human females during premenstrual and menstrual periods. Dalton (1961) found, for example, that 49 % of all violence by imprisoned women was committed during these eight days of the month. There are several possible reasons for such irritability (*Moyer, 1971*). First, it may result directly from lower progesterone levels. Irritability, can be reduced by administration of progesterone and is normally lower in women taking oral contraceptives. (which contains progesterone or similar agents). Second, a more indirect effect may be an increased level of aldosterone, an adrenal hormone important for water and salt regulation in the body. This may increase neural excitability. Thirdly, hypoglycemia is well known to increase irritability and is more pronounced during menstruation. A high protein diet tends to be therapeutic. *Moyer (1971)* suggests that hypoglycemia may be a more important factor in matrimonial relations, threats and cruelty to children than is commonly recognized. Finally, social factors may be involved : Women may learn they are expected to be irritable during menstruation.

Thus, it can be concluded that in addition to such factors as frustration, irritation, anger, arousal, imitation, instrumental reward and social norms, there are also biological factors influencing violent behaviours.