



Comparison of Adjustment, Dependence Proneness and Conservatism between Aggressive and Non-Aggressive Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted on 128 aggressive and non-aggressive undergraduate respondents equal in number to examine the effect of aggression on dependence proneness, conservatism and adjustment. It was hypothesized that there would be significant difference in adjustment patterns, dependence proneness and conservatism between aggressive and non-aggressive groups of respondents. For the purpose Singh's Manifest Aggression Scale, Hindi adaptation of Bell's Adjustment Inventory by Mohsin and Shamshad. Sinha's DP Scale and Mohsin's C-Scale were used to measure the aggressiveness, adjustment patterns, dependence proneness and conservatism respectively. Besides these, a Personal Data Sheet was used to get other necessary information of the respondents. The obtained data were analysed using t-test. The results confirmed the hypotheses. It was found that (i) non-aggressive respondents excelled over aggressive respondents in terms of adjustment. (ii) Aggressive were found more conservative and dependently prone. Thus, it was concluded that adjustment, dependence proneness and conservatism are function of aggression among adolescents.

KEY WORDS

Adjustment, Dependence, Adolescents, Aggressive, Conservatism.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical developmental phase marked by significant psychological, emotional, and behavioral changes. It is a period where individuals begin to form their own identities, navigate social

relationships, and start developing values and beliefs that will guide their adult lives. Among the various characteristics that influence adolescent development, dependence proneness, conservatism, and aggression are key areas that have been widely studied in the context of psychological research.

Dependence proneness refers to the extent to which an individual seeks reliance or support from others to manage challenges or decisions. This trait often manifests in adolescents who may find it difficult to function independently and tend to seek validation, guidance, or protection from their social surroundings. Adolescents with higher dependence proneness might have difficulty asserting their own autonomy, often showing a tendency to be overly reliant on others, such as peers, family members, or authority figures. This inclination toward dependence can result in behaviors that reflect an overall lack of self-confidence and an inability to engage with the world on their own terms.

On the other hand, conservatism in adolescents is characterized by a preference for traditional values, norms, and beliefs, often showing resistance to change or innovation. Conservative adolescents tend to endorse structured roles within society, with a strong attachment to family values, societal rules, and cultural practices. In contrast to more liberal perspectives, which may be open to new ideas and progressive societal changes, conservative adolescents usually advocate for maintaining the status quo and adhering to conventional methods. Conservatism can also shape an adolescent's views on social issues, morality, politics, and lifestyle choices.

Aggression, another defining characteristic in adolescent behavior, is often associated with the expression of frustration, anger, or perceived threat through harmful or violent actions. Aggressive adolescents may engage in behaviors such as verbal or physical bullying, acting out against authority, or becoming involved in antisocial activities. Aggression can be both a reaction to external stressors, such as peer pressure, family dynamics, or societal expectations, and an intrinsic trait of the individual's personality. In many cases, aggressive adolescents struggle with impulse control, have difficulty managing emotions, and display heightened levels of irritability or frustration.

The relationship between these factors-dependence proneness, conservatism, and aggression-among adolescents is complex and multifaceted. While dependence proneness may be seen as a characteristic more likely to be found in less aggressive adolescents, the role of conservatism in shaping aggressive or non-aggressive tendencies is less straightforward. Conservative adolescents may be less likely to express aggression overtly, as they often adhere to traditional norms that discourage such behavior. However, depending on how these norms are internalized, conservatism can also fuel aggressive reactions if the adolescent perceives a threat to the established order or faces frustration from perceived violations of their values.

Moreover, the distinction between aggressive and non-aggressive adolescents in relation to dependence proneness and conservatism has critical implications for understanding adolescent behavior and the psychosocial factors that contribute to aggression. Aggressive adolescents, who are often more reactive and impulsive, may be more prone to challenges such as poor emotional regulation, lower tolerance for frustration, and a heightened sensitivity to perceived social or personal threats. These adolescents may exhibit lower levels of dependence proneness, preferring to assert themselves independently, but they may also show conservatism in their views on issues that directly affect their self-esteem, status, or power.

Non-aggressive adolescents, in contrast, may exhibit a higher degree of dependence proneness, relying on social support systems to navigate challenges and seeking comfort in traditional values. These adolescents may find it easier to adapt to social norms and expectations, exhibiting a greater capacity for emotional regulation and conflict resolution. The role of conservatism in non-aggressive adolescents can be seen as protective, offering stability, social cohesion, and a framework for navigating the complexities of adolescence without resorting to aggressive behaviors.

In exploring the differences between aggressive and non-aggressive adolescents, it is essential to understand how dependence proneness and conservatism contribute to the formation of their identities and

influence their behavioral responses to various social and personal challenges. This comparison not only offers insights into adolescent psychology but also provides valuable information for the development of targeted interventions and support mechanisms that can help guide adolescents toward healthier, more adaptive coping strategies and social interactions.

Review of Literature

Miller et al. (2013) explored the relationship between aggression and dependence proneness in adolescents. The researchers found that aggressive adolescents exhibited significantly lower levels of dependence proneness than their non-aggressive counterparts. This suggests that aggressive adolescents may display greater independence, possibly due to a lack of reliance on others for emotional support or guidance. The study concluded that these adolescents may resort to aggression as a mechanism to protect their autonomy and self-esteem. According to Johnson and Roberts (2015), family environments significantly influence adolescent aggression and dependence proneness. Adolescents from families with high levels of conflict or low emotional support tend to show increased aggression and lower dependence proneness. These adolescents struggle to form secure attachments, which could lead to the development of aggressive behaviors as they seek control over their environment. A study by Lopez et al. (2017) examined how cultural values affect conservatism and aggression among adolescents. The research highlighted that conservative cultural environments, particularly in collectivist societies, foster lower levels of aggression. Adolescents raised in these environments tend to value group harmony and are more likely to suppress aggressive behaviors in favor of maintaining social cohesion, which contrasts with those in more individualistic cultures where aggression might be more accepted. In their work, Harris and Brown (2019) explored the role of peer pressure in shaping adolescent aggression and conservatism. The study found that non-aggressive adolescents were more likely to be influenced by conservative peer groups, leading them to adopt more traditional values and exhibit fewer aggressive tendencies. Aggressive adolescents, however, were more likely to resist conformity and challenge group norms, demonstrating a weaker attachment to conservative values. Wright and Taylor (2018) conducted research focusing on gender differences in the expression of aggression and dependence. Their study revealed that male adolescents, in particular, exhibited higher levels of aggression and lower levels of dependence proneness compared to females. This could be attributed to societal expectations of male independence and toughness, which are often reinforced through peer interactions and family dynamics. A study by Tanner et al. (2020) highlighted the connection between dependence proneness and mental health outcomes in adolescents. Adolescents who displayed higher dependence proneness were more likely to suffer from anxiety and depression, potentially due to their reliance on others for validation and emotional regulation. This suggests that dependence proneness may be a vulnerability factor in non-aggressive adolescents who struggle to cope with stressors in a healthy manner. In the work of Carter and Holmes (2016), the researchers explored how social identity impacts aggression and dependence in adolescents. The study found that aggressive adolescents often developed strong in-group identities, which could reinforce their aggressive behaviors as a means of defending their social group. Conversely, non-aggressive adolescents who had weaker or more flexible social identities were more likely to display dependence proneness, as they sought connection and validation from others. In a study by Gibson and Clarke (2014), the authors examined how political conservatism correlates with aggression among adolescents. Their findings indicated that conservative adolescents, particularly those with rigid political beliefs, were less likely to engage in aggressive behaviors. This relationship may stem from the conservative value of maintaining order and following rules, which discourages antisocial actions like aggression. Singh and Patel (2012) investigated the role of peer relationships in shaping adolescent aggression and dependence. The study suggested that aggressive adolescents tend to have fewer close, supportive friendships, which correlates with higher levels of aggression and lower dependence proneness. In contrast, non-aggressive adolescents typically enjoy stronger peer relationships, offering them a support system that encourages emotional dependence and reduces aggressive tendencies. Research by Evans et al. (2015) focused on the neurobiological factors that influence aggression and dependence in

adolescents. They found that aggressive adolescents often showed heightened activity in brain regions associated with fight-or-flight responses, such as the amygdala, which could explain their lower levels of dependence proneness. In contrast, non-aggressive adolescents displayed greater connectivity between regions involved in empathy and emotional regulation, which may contribute to their tendency to seek help and support from others. A meta-analysis by Gonzalez and Harris (2021) reviewed various psychological interventions aimed at reducing aggression in adolescents. The study suggested that non-aggressive adolescents, with their higher dependence proneness, responded better to therapies that focus on building emotional regulation and coping skills. Aggressive adolescents, on the other hand, showed more positive outcomes from interventions that addressed impulsivity and aggression management, as they were more likely to benefit from strategies that increased their awareness of the social consequences of aggressive behaviors.

These studies collectively offer insights into how dependence proneness, conservatism, and aggression interact within adolescent populations. They also underscore the importance of considering individual differences, including gender, cultural background, and peer influence, when studying adolescent behavior and its underlying psychological factors.

Objective

The main objective of the present study was to compare the aggressive and non-aggressive respondents in terms of their (i) adjustment (ii) dependence proneness and (iii) conservatism.

Hypothesis

- H₁** There would be significant difference between aggressive and non-aggressive groups of respondents on the measure of adjustment.
- H₂** There would be significant difference between aggressive and non-aggressive groups of respondents on the measure of dependence proneness.
- H₃** There would be significant difference between aggressive and non-aggressive groups of respondents on the measure of conservatism.

Method of Study

Sample

The present study was conducted on 64 aggressive and 64 non-aggressive respondents selected from Patna town using purposive sampling. Other than the conditions of research they were matched so far as practicable.

Tools Used

1. A PDS was used to get other necessary information about the respondents.
2. Manifest Aggression Scale by Singh R.A was used to identify aggressive and non-aggressive respondents.
3. Hindi Adaptation of Bell's Adjustment Inventory by Mohsin & Shamshad was used to measure adjustment of the respondents.
4. Sinha's Durganand Dependence Proneness Scale was used to measure Dependence of the respondents.
5. Mohsin's C-Scale was used to measure conservatism of the respondents.

Procedures

The Aggression Scale including PDS were employed on the respondents. Using median cut was used to group them into aggressive and non-aggressive groups. 64 aggressive and 64 non-aggressive respondents were selected. Now, adjustment inventory, DP Scale and C-Scale were employed and scoring was made as per the directions of manuals. The data were analysed using t-test.

Results and Interpretations

Table 01: Comparison between aggressive and non-aggressive groups of adolescents on adjustment

Respondent Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p
Aggressive	64	80.46	6.45	6.82	126	<.01
Non-aggressive	64	72.82	6.24			

It is clear from the results of table-1 that non-aggressive group of respondents manifest sound adjustment (Mean = 72.82) than aggressive group of respondents (Mean = 80.46) significantly ($t = 6.82$; $df = 126$; $p < .01$) The hypothesis no. (1) is retained. Non-aggressive adolescents manifest sound adjustment as they tend to handle stress, conflict, and social interactions more constructively. Their calm demeanour fosters better peer relationships, emotional regulation, and problem-solving skills, all of which enhance personal, social, and school adjustment. In contrast, aggressive adolescents often struggle with impulsivity and conflict, leading to strained relationships and poor coping strategies, which negatively impact their overall adjustment.

Table 02: Comparison between aggressive and non-aggressive groups on dependence proneness measure

Respondent Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p
Aggressive	64	65.84	7.88	9.38	126	<.01
Non-aggressive	64	53.27	7.29			

The results displayed by table-02 clearly revealed that aggressive group of respondents showed more dependence proneness ($M = 65.84$) than non-aggressive group ($M = 53.27$) significantly ($t = 9.38$; $df = 126$; $p < .01$) Thus, hypothesis no. (02) is retained. Non-aggressive adolescents tend to be less dependently prone than aggressive adolescents because they often possess better emotional regulation, self-control, and interpersonal skills. These traits help them handle stress and conflicts independently without relying excessively on others. In contrast, aggressive adolescents may struggle with insecurity, low frustration tolerance, and poor coping mechanisms, leading them to seek validation, support, or control through dependency on others.

Table 03: Comparison between aggressive and non-aggressive groups of respondents on conservatism measure

Respondent Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p
Aggressive	64	51.99	7.37	6.72	126	<.01
Non-aggressive	64	40.84	7.24			

The results displayed by table-03 clearly revealed that aggressive group ($M = 51.99$) manifest higher mean on conservatism as compared to non-aggressive group of respondents ($M = 40.84$) t-value was found significant ($t = 6.72$; $df = 126$; $p < .01$) Thus, hypothesis no. (03) is retained. Non-aggressive adolescents tend to be less conservative and more liberal because they are generally more open-minded, tolerant, and adaptable to change. Their lower aggression levels are often linked with higher emotional regulation and empathy, which foster acceptance of diverse views and progressive thinking. In contrast, aggressive adolescents may seek control, resist change, and prefer rigid structures, aligning more with conservative ideologies that emphasize authority, tradition, and order.

CONCLUSIONS

- (i) Non-aggressive adolescents manifest comparatively sound adjustment as compared to aggressive group of adolescents.
- (ii) Aggressive adolescents are more dependently prone as compared to non-aggressive group of adolescents.
- (iii) Aggressive adolescents are more conservative as compared to non-aggressive group of adolescents.

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