



# A study of aggression among adolescents and its coping strategies

Dr. Ranjeeta Jauhari

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, D. U. Govt. Degree College, Narendranagar, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand, India

\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Ranjeeta Jauhari

Received 13 March 2026; Accepted 22 Apr 2026; Published 18 May 2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64171/JSRD.5.S2.204-208>

## Abstract

There is a great concern about the incidence of aggressive behavior in adolescents. This complex and troubling issue need to be carefully understood by parents, teachers and counselors. Present study examines the effect of gender on aggression in adolescents and risk factors which are responsible for producing aggressive behavior and providing its coping strategies. The result revealed that boys are more prone to aggression as compared to girls adolescents. The analysis of study found a number of risk factors and suggests coping strategies to manage the aggressive behavior in adolescent boys and girls.

**Keywords:** Adolescents, Gender, Aggression, Family environment

## Introduction

Among all developmental stages, adolescence stage is considered as a very crucial stage that needs to be studied. If the behavior of the adolescents is properly modified and their energy is properly channelized, they can prove to be a boon for the society. In India, majority of the young children, due to undesired and unfavorable atmosphere at home, school and society are the victims of various behavioral problems such as hyperactivity, aggressiveness, violation, non-compliance, social withdrawal and disruptive behavior etc. Among these behavioral problems, aggressive behavior is the most troublesome problem and is of key concern not only for parents and teachers but also for the entire society. In Our daily life, we observe the media reports of physical assault, acid attacks, violent threats, unexpected aggression are more common in headlines. India is a developing country and in the present scenario, our youth is indulging in various anti-social activities like threatening, shooting, committing suicide, terrorism etc. Aggression is ultimately responsible for all these activities, which is not a good sign for the society. With the changing era of time and modernization of society, there is a considerable increase in the incidents of aggression among adolescents and youths, which are more commonly seen in boys as compared to girls; as this phase of life is the most important part for the development of personality. Adolescence is a transitional phase of growth and development between childhood and adulthood. It is the age group between 10 to 19 years and is the time to develop knowledge and skills, to learn, to manage emotions and acquire attributes and abilities that is important for enjoying the adolescent years and adult roles.

There are about 1.2 billion adolescents in the world, around 243 million of them live in India contributing to one fourth of the total population in India (WHO, 2019 and UNICEF India, 2019)<sup>[22]</sup>.

However, upcoming our young generation is wasting their golden period in the aggressive activities, violence and getting involved into the crimes. Moreover, the aggression and irritation of this age are overlooked. Physical and psychological changes taking place during adolescence which are drastic in nature and are not easy to cope up with. Disturbed relationships with parents, teachers, seniors, and peer groups, academic backwardness compared to high expectation, curiosity to explore sexual practices, and substance abuse are the main triggering factors for the psychological discord in adolescence. Aggression is an action that is intended to harm someone. It can be covert and not as detectable. Bandura's (1973)<sup>[1]</sup> social learning theory, aggression is treated as complex event that include behaviors that produce injurious and negative effects to its victims as well as labeling the acts as aggressive. According to Johnson (1972), "aggression is physical or verbal behavior that is intended to hurt someone."

Bhagi and Sharma (1992) stated that "aggression is injurious and destructive behavior."

Coi and Dogde (2000)<sup>[4]</sup> defined as aggression is any behavior intended to harm an individual who is motivated to avoid being harmed." In social psychology, aggression refers to behaviors formed to hurt another person.

The concept of aggression falls into two major categories: Instrumental aggression and hostile aggression. Instrumental aggression is used to accomplish an objective or purpose, and hostile aggression is intended to hurt others and involves two types of overt aggression (physical and verbal) and social aggression. Physical violence refers to hurting someone deliberately to cause him discomfort, such as punching, pushing, throwing things etc. The use of offensive language such as shouting and screaming that causes a person's hurtful feelings and lowers the value of a person is called verbal aggression. Social violence refers to behavior aimed at

undermining the social status and friendships of others. Some forms of social violence include heavy silence and negligence. Adolescent aggression has long been the centre of interest to researchers and mental health professionals. Present study is related to such aggression during adolescence which focused on understanding its development, effect of gender on aggression, identifying various factors which place individuals at risk and coping strategies.

### Review of literature

A number of studies have been done to assess the effect of various variables like gender, family environment, Locale, family conflicts, etc. on the level of aggression in adolescents. Kumar *et al.* (2016) [12] found that the prevalence of aggression among school-going adolescents was around 17.7%, overall in their study. Banga (2012) [2] conducted a study to examine the gender wise difference in the aggression of secondary school students. Result showed that boy's have higher level of aggression than girls. Pargappa (2015) also found similar results. Sidhu *et al.* (2019) carried out a study to explore the forms of aggression varied with the gender of adolescents. They revealed that the high prevalence of aggression (51.9%) was found in males having more physical aggression than females. This was in contrast to the study done by Garg *et al.* which attributed higher levels of aggression in females as compared to males. Shuka (2022) also found such contradictory findings. Pingale (2018) [14] examined the level of aggression among urban and rural students and found that students who belong to rural population had significantly high aggression than urban students.

Shao and Wang (2019) [16] revealed that violent video games is positively related to adolescent aggression. Family conflicts and media violence are also the best predictors of aggression in teenagers (Fikkers *et al.* 2013) [5].

Rana and Malhotra (2005) [15] conducted a study to examine the relationship between aggression and family environment among adolescents. They found that family environment affected aggressive behavior. Kaur and Niwas (2015) [11] also found such evidences.

Jain (2017) [8] revealed that adolescents of poor family environment have higher level of aggression as compared to healthy family environment. Thakur a Grewal (2021) also found a strong relationship between aggression and family environment.

### Methodology

**Objectives of the study: The main objectives of the present study are as follows**

- To examine the effect of gender on aggression in adolescent boys and girls.
- To study the present status and risk factors for aggressive behavior in adolescents.
- To analyze the possible coping strategies to manage and control adolescent aggression.

### Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the aggression of adolescent boys and girls.

### Method

#### Sample

The sample of the study consisted of 30 adolescents (15 boys and 15 Girls) from Rudrapur, Distt. Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand. The Sample was selected using simple random sampling method.

#### Tool used

For the measurement of aggression, a Hindi version of Aggressive Inventory was employed. The Hindi adaptation was done by Dr. M.K. Sultania. This adaptation of the inventory contains 67 items whereas the original inventory of Buss and Durkee has 75 items, 8 items were dropped as they have insignificant correlation with the test as a whole. The inventory includes 59 items that measure hostility and 8 items measure guilt. It said to be highly reliable and valid.

#### Procedure

On the basis of the sample, first of all, the group-1 consisting 15 boys from Rudrapur were administered the aggression Inventory individually at a time, after the formation of rapport. Instructions as given in the manual were followed for administration. The similar procedure was followed for remaining groups (15 girls) to collect the data. The scoring procedure was followed as prescribed in the manual.

#### Statistical analysis and results

The objective of the study was to investigate the aggression in adolescent boys and girls. It is necessary to analyze following data which are shown in the Table-1.

**Table 1:** t-value of aggression in adolescent boys and girls

Gender	Level of aggression				Level of significance	df
	N	Mean	SD	t-value		
Boys	15	14.7	1.06	7.66	Significant	28
Girls	15	11.5	1.14			

The Table-1 mentioned the mean, SD and t-value of adolescent boys and Girls. The Table shows that the boys (M=14.7, SD=1.06) were found more aggressive than girls (M=11.5, SD = 1.14). The result is significant at  $p < .05$  and  $p < .01$  level of significance. In other words, we can say that there is a significant difference in the level of aggression of adolescent boys and girls.

#### Discussion

The objective of the study was to find out the significant effect of gender on aggression in adolescents. It was hypothesized that there would be a significant difference in aggression among boys and girls adolescents. It is clear from result that our hypothesis has been accepted. Previous studies also supported our findings. Sidhu *et al.* (2019) conducted a study to explore the effect of gender on aggression among adolescents. They showed that the level of aggression was found high in males as compared to females. Banga (2012) [2] also found similar results. Discussion of the findings would be done according to other objectives respectively.

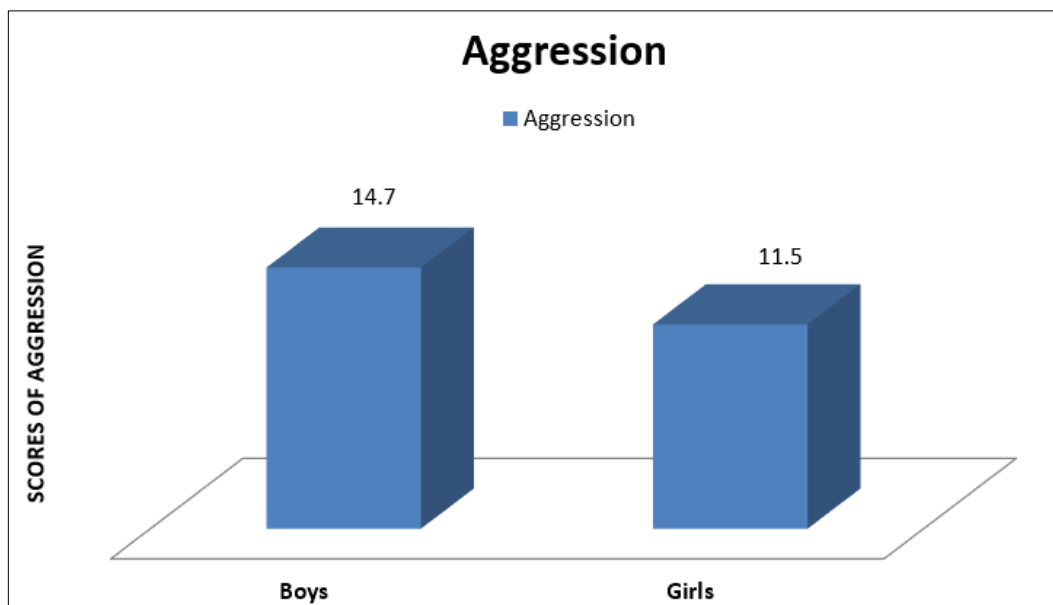


Fig 1: shows that comparative graph of both girls and boys adolescents and aggression level

### Risk factors of aggressive behavior in adolescents

Second objective of the study was to find out the risk factors of aggressive behavior in adolescents. There are a number of risk factors which have been found responsible for aggression in adolescents. These are as follows:

- a) **Traumatic events:** Death or illness of loved one, divorce or extreme siblings and peer harassment is extremely stressful and can lead to aggression in teenagers. Even ongoing clashes and discord in the family, especially among parents can cause such a behavior.
- b) **Abuse:** Physical or sexual abuse is another reason for aggressive behavior among adolescents. This abuse makes them feel angry, inadequate and ashamed. Because they are unable to tell anyone about the abuse, it manifests in the form of aggression.
- c) **Medical reasons:** In several cases, medical issues erupts the aggressiveness in teenagers, as well.
  - Brain damage, epilepsy, mental retardation and Tourett's syndrome are some of the other causes of producing disruptive and aggressive behavior among teenagers.
  - With proper medical examination and diagnosis, these medical disorders can be treated and the aggression can be brought under control.
  - ADHD and learning disorders - Teenagers suffering from learning disorders and ADHD have several social and emotional difficulties. This may come across as the teen being aggressiveness
- d) **Substance abuse/drug addiction:** Many teenagers do experiment with drugs and alcohol. However, when they become addicted or start abusing alcohol and drug regularly, It can lead to aggressive behavior.
- e) **Peer pressure:** Teenagers yearn to be accepted and become part of a group. If this does not happen, it can cause pain and anger, leading to aggressive behavior.

- f) **Low self-esteem:** Some adolescents have low self-esteem and they try to cover this up through aggression. This is especially true when they are among their peers.
- g) **Smart phone addiction:** Depressed teens may go online to escape their problems, but excessive smart phone and internet use tends to increase feelings of isolation and worsen depression.

Therefore, traumatic events, abuse, health related problems, addiction, peer-pressure, low self-esteem and various types of addictions and poor family environment are found to be the most frequent risk factors for adolescent's aggressive behavior. Kakkad and others (2014) [10] have also found in their studies that the prevalence of psychosocial, emotional, behavioral problems, sexual orientation and drug abuse in adolescents. With effective counseling by parents and teachers, sex education, Stress coping techniques and improving family environment, we can ensure a better future and improved adolescent health.

### Coping strategies for adolescents aggression

Our third objective was to analyze the possible coping strategies to manage and control adolescence aggression. There are several options found to manage and control the aggression level of adolescents. Some of these are listed below:

1. **Individual counseling:** Individual counseling is the useful method to control the aggression in adolescence. Talking to trained and licensed professional is recommended. This can make them take responsibility for their behavior and also resolve problems with their relationships.
2. **Medication:** If the adolescent has been diagnosed with psychiatric or neurological problems like epilepsy, depression and taking the right prescription of medication can reduce aggression.
3. **Home rules:** Creating a set of home rules that adolescents have to follow whether they like it or not.
  - Make the rules clear.
  - Also let them know that they will have to bear with the consequences, if the rules are broken.

4. **Family counseling:** To involve the whole family in counseling could be a good idea. Talking to one another and being guided by professionals and trained therapists can be very helpful. This can resolve conflicts and relationship problems that are causing aggressive behavior in adolescents. Gentile *et al.* (2014) found that parental monitoring is significantly correlated with reduced media violence exposure and less aggressive behavior in 6 months later.
5. **Relaxation techniques:** There are some relaxation techniques like Meditation, Pranayama, Deep breathing, Om chanting, Shavasana play an important role in controlling the stress and aggression in adolescents.
  - If they are burdened with homework or experiences extreme peer pressure, this will be quite useful.
  - Teach them to use the above techniques, when they get angry and stressed.
6. **Catharsis:** Freud has recommended catharsis or out let of pent up emotions as the most suitable way of releasing tension. In psychotherapy, this principle of catharsis is very much used even now a day. It is every body's experience that the catharsis minimizes aggressive experience.
7. **Talking therapy:** When an adolescent feels hostility or annoyance against someone, if he or she tells someone of confidence like a good friend, her brother or sister and any well wisher his aggression is released without harming the enemy or target of aggression.
8. **Writing therapy:** Daily diary writing is a kind of writing therapy. By this technique, hostile feeling can be relieved without target of aggression in adolescents.
9. **Displacement:** Aggression of children and adolescents can be relieved through displacement or transfer of aggression to some objects like toy, doll or any non living things. Various experimental studies indicate that when children are given the chance to express their anger and aggression in course of their growth, they become hostile afterwards.
10. **Cognitive strategies:** Aggression operates through three different routes - affect, cognition and arousal. There is a significant interaction among these three components of the internal state of a person. Cognitive strategies to reducing aggression suggests that breaking the cycle of aggressive thought process may promote in reducing aggressive tendencies and behavior. Apology is one of the most simple strategy to reduce aggressive behavior in adolescents.
11. **Good parental model:** Parents should try their best not to quarrel in the presence of child. They should try to be best models for the child to imitate. Good parenting style and healthy family environment make them to cope with their stress and anger.
12. **Training to tolerate frustration:** Frustration tolerance can be generated in the child by not fulfilling whatever he wishes. The genuine needs should be no doubt fulfilled. But certain wishes which are undesirable should not be fulfilled and he/she should be trained gradually to tolerate the frustration of certain needs. Because of the difference in frustration- tolerance capacity people differ in their aggressive reactions. In this case, imitation of models tolerating frustration also helps a lot in the management and control of aggression in teenagers.
13. **Teaching of discipline and morality:** By training the child to be, disciplined and develop positive values and morality a lot of aggressive behavior can be controlled. Parents and teachers have to play an active role in this regard.
14. **Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART):** Aggression Replacement therapy is a cognitive behavioral intervention for reduction of aggressive and violent behavior, originally focused on adolescents. It is a multi-model program that has three components; social skills, anger control training and moral reasoning.
15. **Judicious early childhood training:** Aggressive behavior can be prevented to some extent by judicious early childhood training, proper parental care and adequate parenting style. By trying to fulfill the basic needs of the child, the child can be exposed to less frustration inducing situations.
16. **Guided imagery therapy:** Guided Imagery is a cognitive behavioral technique in which an aggressive person is guided in imagining a relaxing scene of experiences have been shown to be effective in helping individuals learn or modify behaviors such as:
  - Learning to relax
  - Changing or controlling their negative emotions
  - Learning new and desirable behavior
  - Eliminating or reducing aggressive behavior

## Conclusion

Based on the summary of the findings indicated above, the researcher draws the following conclusions, and their corresponding implications:

- The results revealed that family is the important factor in the life of adolescents. Aggression can be reduced in children who experienced better than average family environment, which included less family conflict and more family cohesion. Aggression is positively correlated with conflict. It suggests that higher the conflict in family keep higher the risk to engage in aggressive behavior. Lack of cooperation among family members may lead to aggressive behaviors whereas better family relations decrease the level of aggression in adolescents.
- Findings also indicated that aggressive behavior in adolescents is complex interaction and combination of risk factors including children with a history of physical abuse/sexual abuse, exposure to violence in the home or community, in media (TV, Movies etc.), presence of firearms in home and genetic factors.

**References**

1. Bandura A. Aggression: A social learning analysis. Englewood Cliffs (NJ): Prentice Hall; 1973.
2. Banga CI. Aggression of secondary school students in relation to their gender and type of school. *Scholarly Res J Humanit Sci Engl Lang*. 2012;2(11):2971-2979.
3. Bhagi M, Sharma S. Encyclopedia dictionary of psychology. Vol. 1. New Delhi: Animal Publisher; 1982.
4. Coie JD, Dodge KA. Aggression and antisocial behavior. In: Damon W, Eisenberg N, editors. *Handbook of child psychology: Social, emotional and personality development*. New York: Wiley; 2000.
5. Fikkers KM, Piotrowski JT, Weeda WD, Vossen HGM, Valkenburg PM. Double dose: High family conflict enhances the effect of media violence exposure on adolescents' aggression. *Societies*. 2013;3:280-292.
6. Gentile DA, Li D, Khoo A, Prot S, Anderson CA. Mediators and moderators of long-term effects of violent video games on aggressive behavior: Practice, thinking, and action. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2014;168(5):450-457.
7. Garg I, Sethi S, Kishore J. The prevalence and patterns of aggression in school adolescents in a rural area of Moga district of Punjab, India. *Indian J Youth Adolesc Health*. 2010;5:43-46.
8. Jain J. Family environment and aggression in adolescents: A correlational study. *Indian J Health Wellbeing*. 2017;8(7):598-601.
9. Johnson R. *Aggression in man and animal*. Philadelphia: Saunders; 1972.
10. Kakkad A, Trivedi M, Trivedi G, Raichandan A. Study of adolescent problems and psychology. *J Evol Med Dent Sci*. 2014;3(37):9564-9574.
11. Kaur D, Niwas R. Aggressive behavior of secondary school students in relation to their family environment. *Scholarly J Interdiscip Stud*. 2015;4(27):4341-4345.
12. Kumar M, Bhilwar M, Kapoor R, Sharma P. Prevalence of aggression among school-going students in India: A review study. *Indian J Youth Adolesc Health*. 2016;3:39-47.
13. Pargappa GK. Study of gender differences in aggression among B.Ed. prospectives. *Int J Manag Soc Sci Res Rev*. 2015;1(10):6-7.
14. Pingale VG. A study of aggression and self-concept among graduate students. *Int J Indian Psychol*. 2018;6(1).
15. Rana M, Malhotra D. Family environment as a predictor of aggressive behavior. *Stud Psychol*. 2005;47(1):61-74.
16. Shao R, Wang X. Relation of violent video games to adolescent aggression: An examination of moderated mediation effect. *Front Psychol*. 2019;10:384.
17. Sharma P. Aggression in relation to family environment of adolescents belonging to urban and rural areas. *J Emerg Technol Innov Res*. 2019;6(1):212-217.
18. Shukla KN. Aggression among rural adolescents: A study. *IJARIE*. 2022;8(1):166-170.
19. Sidhu TK, Kaur P, Sangha NK, Bansal AS. Aggression among adolescents: A cross-sectional study. *Adesh Univ J Med Sci Res*. 2019;1:21-26.
20. Sultania MK. *Aggression inventory*. Agra: National Psychological Corporation; 2006.
21. Thakur S, Grewal KK. A study of aggression among adolescents. *Int Res J Adv Sci Hub*. 2021;3(1):46-51.
22. UNICEF. Investing in adolescents can break cycles of poverty and inequity [Internet]. 2019 [cited 2019 Aug 26].
23. World Health Organization. *Maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health* [Internet]. Geneva: WHO; 2019 [cited 2019 Aug 26].