

 <p>ISSN NO. 2320-5407</p>	<p>Journal Homepage: - <a href="http://www.journalijar.com">www.journalijar.com</a></p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Article DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01/1610 DOI URL: <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/1610">http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/1610</a></p>	 <p>INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR) ISSN 2320-5407 Journal homepage: <a href="http://www.journalijar.com">http://www.journalijar.com</a> Journal DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01</p>
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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### ROLE OF SELF ESTEEM IN AGGRESSION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS.

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#### **Manuscript Info**

##### **Manuscript History**

Received: 12 July 2016

Final Accepted: 22 August 2016

Published: September 2016

##### **Key words:-**

Self Esteem, Aggression,

#### **Abstract**

Purpose of the present study was to investigate the role of self-esteem in aggression among undergraduate students. The sample comprised of 550 (270 male and 280 female) undergraduate students studying in arts stream of Allahabad University and its constituent colleges. Self-Esteem inventory (M.S. Prasad and G.P. Thakur (1977) was used for measuring self esteem, and Aggression Inventory (AI) adapted by M.K. Sultania (2006), originally constructed by Buss-Durkee (1957) was used for measuring adolescents aggression. Product Moment Correlation and t-test were used for analyzing the data. Result showed that there was significant negative correlation between self esteem and aggression. Gender differences were also studied and it was found that male students scored higher on aggression in comparison to female students. No significant gender differences were found in self esteem.

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#### **Introduction:-**

Youth aggression and violence are some of the major social problems in India as well as abroad. Frightening incidents of aggression are too common today, in the streets, home, offices and college campuses in the form of road rage, domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, vulgar comments and ragging. The daily newspapers are reporting hundreds of incidents of aggression and violence every day. Most social psychologists today are interested in understanding why people become aggressive, what factors influence aggression and how to reduce it. Researchers are interested in discovering what biological, environmental, psychological and social factors influence aggressive behavior and how to use these discoveries to reduce unwarranted aggression.

The second variable which is important research topic in psychology in relation to aggression is self esteem. Historically, low self-esteem has often been viewed as playing an important role in aggressive behaviour. It has been suggested that aggression may provide individuals with low self-esteem with an increased sense of power and independence, that aggression may serve as attention seeking behaviour which enhances self-esteem, or that individuals with low self-esteem may externalize blame for their problems and failures to protect themselves against feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, and shame, which leads to aggression towards others (Ostrowsky, 2009). Many researchers have revealed a significant link between low self esteem and aggression. (Donnellon et.al 2005, Teng et.al 2015, Bryant 2006). On the other hand in the view of Baumeister et.al (2000) neither high nor low self-esteem is a direct cause of violence. For decades, psychologists believed that low self-esteem was an important cause of aggression. This view appears to have emerged from clinical impressions rather than any single theoretical formulation or line of empirical evidence. It was challenged by Baumeister et al. (1996), who reviewed assorted

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bodies of findings and concluded that perpetrators of aggression generally hold favourable and perhaps even inflated views of themselves. Baumeister et al.(2003). It is generally believed that there are many benefits to having a positive view of the self. Those who have high self-esteem are presumed to be psychologically happy and healthy (Branden, 1994; Taylor & Brown, 1988), whereas those with low self-esteem are believed to be psychologically distressed and perhaps even depressed (Tennen & Affleck, 1993). With the number of inconsistencies among the literature, researchers cannot confidently claim that either high or low self-esteem predicts aggressive behaviors. The topic is still debatable. Therefore, the purpose of present study was to examine the role of self esteem in development of aggressive behaviour among adolescents.

#### Objectives of the study:-

1. To study the relationship between aggression among students and their self- esteem.
2. To find out whether male and female students differ significantly from one another on aggression.
3. To find out whether male and female students differ significantly from one another on self esteem.

#### Null hypotheses:-

1. There is no significant relationship between aggression among male and female students and their self-esteem.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female students on aggression.
3. There is no significant difference between male and female students on self esteem.

#### Method of the study:-

In the execution of the present study descriptive survey method of research was employed.

#### Sample:-

The sample comprised of 550 (270 male and 280 female) undergraduate students studying in arts stream of Allahabad University and its constituent colleges. Mean age of the Respondents is 18.44 years.

#### Tools:-

**Aggression Inventory:-** Adapted by M.K. Sultania (2006), originally constructed by Buss-Durkee (1957). The Buss-Durkee (1957) Aggression scale is a self -report type of test which measures general Aggression as well as various forms of aggression, such as assault, direct aggression, irritability, negativism, resentment, suspicion, verbal aggression and guilt. The Hindi adaptation was done by Dr. Sultania for Hindi speaking population / sample. 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 measure that hostility and 8 measure guilt. In this study composite aggression score has been taken for analysis.

**Self-esteem Inventory: -** Constructed and standardized by M.S. Prasad & G.P. Thakur (1977). The inventory has two parts. Part one measures personally perceived self and part two measures socially perceived self. Of the thirty items, 17 are socially desirable and 13 are socially undesirable. Only part first of inventory has been included in the study.

#### Statistics used:-

Product Moment Correlation and t-test were used for analyzing the data.

#### Results and Discussion:-

**Table 1:- Correlation between aggression and self esteem for male and female students**

S r. no.	Groups	N	Values of correlation
1	Male	270	-.182**
2	Female	280	-.127*

\*/\*\* significant at .05/.01 level

Observation of the table-1 shows that the values of coefficient of correlation between aggression and self esteem for male and female students are -.182 and -.127 respectively and both are significant at .05 level. Correlation among male is significant at .01 level. The aggression is negatively and significantly correlated to self esteem. Therefore the null hypothesis that 'there is no significant relationship between aggression among male and female

students and their self- esteem' is rejected. This means that aggression among male and female students is negatively related to self esteem.

**Table 2:- Comparison between Male and Female Students on aggression and self- esteem**

Sr. No.	Variables	Male (N=270)		Female (N=280)		t-ratio
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1	Aggression	32.62	7.68	31.16	6.90	2.34*
2	Self esteem	147.06	21.80	144.64	19.37	1.38

\* Significant at .05 Level

From the perusal of above table- 2 it is evident that the values of t-ratio are significant for aggression while insignificant for self-esteem. Hence null hypothesis no.2 is rejected and null hypothesis no.3 is accepted.

### Discussion:-

The first objective of the present study was to examine the relationship between self esteem and aggression among male and female students. In the current investigation, negative and significant correlation between aggression and self-esteem was found. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected, that there is no significant relationship between aggression among students and their self esteem. This is consistent with the findings reported in previous researches. The correlation is significantly stronger ( $r = -.182$ ,  $p < .01$ ) for aggression and self esteem in male group as compared to female group ( $r = -.127$ ,  $p < .05$ ). It means that male students whose self esteem is low generally exhibit more aggression as compared to female students. The majority of studies suggest that low self-esteem rather than high self-esteem is related to aggression. Donnellon et al. (2005), in their study found that self-esteem was negatively correlated with the Total Aggression scale of the AQ (Aggression Questionnaire). Similar findings were reported by Bryant Lea L. (2006), Teng et. al. (2015), Lopez et al. (2006) and Shaheen & Jahan (2014). On the contrary Diamantopoulou et al. (2007) found aggressive children had both high and low self esteem.

The other objective of this study was to find out the gender differences in aggression among male and female students. When gender differences were investigated on above sample; it was found that male students scored significantly higher on aggression in comparison to female students. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. This is in agreement with large number of studies (e.g. Diamantopoulou et al. 2007, Arunima 1988, Sumbali 1981, Malviya 1968, Khatri and Kupersmidt 2003, Little et al. 2003, Shaheen and Jahan 2014). The possible explanation of this finding by the researcher is that, in nature male by necessity of existence are more aggressive, it is characteristic more of male than female. Also it is a common perception of masses that it is masculine to be aggressive. In our Indian society where any act of aggression shown by girls even in their childhood is discouraged, , on the other hand boys are not only allowed to indulge in aggressive acts but also encouraged in some occasions by their peer to display it. In most cultures, aggression is less socially acceptable in women than men (Baron and Richardson, 2004). Also mothers often show disapproval when their infant daughters display anger, but support the expression of anger in male infants (Malatesta and Haviland 1982).

The last objective of the study was to find out the gender differences in self-esteem among male and female students. When gender differences were investigated on above sample, it was found that there is no significant difference between male and female students on self esteem. Therefore the null hypothesis was accepted. On the contrary Shaheen and Jahan (2014) and Joshi and Srivastava (2009) reported that male students scored significantly higher on self esteem as compared to female students.

### Conclusion:-

The study reported that aggression is related to low self esteem. i.e. higher the aggression lower is self esteem. It is concluded that self esteem plays an important role in aggressive behavior, as it is negatively correlated with aggression. This is true for both male and female adolescents. It is also concluded that male students scored significantly higher on aggression in comparison to female students. Also it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between male and female students on self esteem.

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