

CORRELATION OF AGGRESSION AND GENERAL CONTENTMENT SCALE IN FEMALE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Anam Tariq¹, Memoona Hira²

Department of Psychology, Islamic International University, Islamabad, Pakistan

Abstract: *Contentment has traditionally been conceptualized as an aspect of the broader constructs of subjective well-being and happiness. Within this conceptualization, contentment is viewed as the positive affective basis, along with joy, for more global well-being; Aggression is defined as behavior aimed at causing harm or pain, psychological harm, or personal injury or physical distraction. In this study a correlation of aggression and contentment is made*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the life span of an individual's there comes a number of problems; where one feels stress and may become aggressive, aggressive tendencies vary greatly in individuals. These tendencies are affected by various factors that might be environmental or internal. If a person is dissatisfied, discontented or disappointed he may frustrate and show higher level of aggression. This study measure how general contentment affects aggression in adults. An adult is a human being or living organism that is of relatively mature age, typically associated with sexual maturity and the attainment of reproductive age. In human context, the term has other subordinate meanings associated to social and legal concepts, for example a legal adult is a legal concept for a person who has attained the age of majority and is therefore regarded as independent, self-sufficient, and responsible (contrast with "minor"). Adulthood can be defined in terms of physiology, psychological adult development, law, personal character, or social status. (Goldberg, 1999) In most of the world, including most of the United States, parts of the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Wales), India and China, the legal adult age is 18 (historically for most purposes, with some notable exceptions as Scotland. According to Erik Erikson's stages of human development, first enumerated in *Childhood and Society* (1950), a young adult is generally a person between the ages of 20 and 40, whereas an adolescent is a person between the ages of 13 and 19, although definitions and opinions vary. The young adult stage in human development precedes middle adulthood. A person in the middle adulthood stage is between the ages of 40 and 65. In maturity, a person is 65 years old or older. According to Erikson, the young adult stage involves the personal need for intimacy and sex. Failure to achieve this need results in isolation, which is avoided, and as a result the young adult strives for love and compassion. The young adult learns that love and compassion may get him what he wants.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Contentment:*

Contentment is a form of pleasant affect involving tranquility

and serenity. It is an emotional response that tends to arise under conditions that include high certainty and low effort, and thus, is akin to the relief or mild joy one might experience in response to feeling safe and cared for. Contentment has traditionally been conceptualized as an aspect of the broader constructs of subjective well-being and happiness. Within this conceptualization, contentment is viewed as the positive affective basis, along with joy, for more global well-being; one's experience of positive emotions (including contentment) contributes to one's subjective appraisal of happiness. Until recently, little research focused on the experience of positive emotions, like contentment, primarily due to the fact that relative to negative emotions, positive emotions are less discrete, fewer in number, and less obvious in terms of their adaptive functions. For example, whereas basic negative emotions such as anger or disgust are associated with specific facial expressions, the experiences of positive emotions such as contentment are not often signaled by specific facial movements. Similarly, negative emotions appear to have obvious adaptive functions (e.g., fear promotes fleeing in times of threat), whereas the functions of positive emotions are less well-understood in terms of the link to specific actions (Lopez, 2009)".

B. *Aggression:*

Aggression is defined as behavior aimed at causing harm or pain, psychological harm, or personal injury or physical distraction. An important aspect of aggressive behavior is the intention underlying the actor's behavior. Not all behaviors resulting in harm are considered aggression. For example, a doctor who makes an injection that harms people, but who did so with the intent of preventing the further spread of illness, is not considered to have committed an aggressive act. (Joireman, Anderson, and Strathman, 2003)

Aggression can be direct or indirect, active or passive, and physical or verbal. Using these categories, human aggression can be grouped into eight classes of behavior:

- Punching the victim (direct, active, physical)
- Insulting the victim (direct, active, verbal)
- Performing a practical joke, setting a booby trap (direct, passive, physical)
- Spreading malicious gossip (direct, passive, verbal)
- Obstructing passage, participating in a sit-in (indirect, active, physical)
- Refusing to speak (indirect, active, verbal)
- Refusing to perform a necessary task (indirect, passive, physical)

Direct aggression, especially physically active aggression, is more common among animals. Actors who express indirect

aggression usually feel less satisfaction, but they are also less concerned about retaliation. Passive and indirect aggression is the least noxious form. Subordinates rebelling against authority figures often use it. In the family relation it is often used by children against their parents. (Joireman, Anderson, and Strathman, 2003)

Theories of aggression:

There are many theories as to what causes to act aggressively. Wagner (2010) stated the following theories of aggression:

Frustration-aggression Hypothesis says when we are blocked from achieving our goal, this leads to frustration. Frustration can then lead to aggression. However, sometimes this frustration can be displaced and lead to something else, e.g. depression.

Relative Deprivation Theory says that when people feel that they deserve more than they have got, this can lead to frustration, which can then lead to aggression.

Cue-arousal Theory says that although frustration leads to anger, it doesn't necessarily lead to aggression. There needs to be some associated stimulus to spark the aggression.

Excitation-transfer Theory suggests that arousal from one situation can be transferred to another situation.

Social Learning Theory says that if a child is rewarded for being aggressive that behavior is positively reinforced and is more likely to be repeated.

Previous studies:

Several researches are conducted on students in their early adult hood the validation study of the aggression questionnaire was also conducted on university students and was published in The Spanish journal of Psychology (2002).

In this study, reliability, construct validity, and criterion validity (using convergent validity) were evaluated. This study involved a total of 384 Education and Psychology students at the University of Jaén in Spain. There were 90 males and 294 females, with a mean age of 21.6 years (SD = 5.6). To estimate test-retest reliability, we used a different group comprised of 154 Psychology students (34 males and 120 females) from the University of Jaén. Their ages ranged between 17 and 24, with a mean age of 18.7 years (SD = 1.2). (Harris, 1997)

To calculate test-retest reliability, the AQ was administered to a group of 154 students twice, with a 5-week interval. Both administrations of the AQ were carried out in group sessions in the classes. Reliability and validity were >

.75 for all scales. (Harris, 1997). This instrument evaluates several components of the construct: anger, verbal aggression, physical aggression, and hostility, and it has shown adequate psychometric standards in English-speaking samples (Buss & Perry, 1992)

Previously the researches done on aggression and contentment do not focus on the general correlation of the two. Several questions are yet unanswered in this respect. According to Freud (1923) there is a continuous conflict between id ego and super ego, and the person utilizes different defense mechanism to reduce the stress from ego.

In Freudian psychoanalytic theory, defense mechanisms are unconscious psychological strategies brought into play by various entities to cope with reality and to maintain self-image. Healthy persons normally use different defenses throughout life. An ego defense mechanism becomes pathological only when its persistent use leads to maladaptive behavior such that the physical and/or mental health of the individual is adversely affected. The purpose of ego defense mechanisms is to protect the mind/self/ego from anxiety, social sanctions or to provide a refuge from a situation with which one cannot currently cope. (Jones, 1961)

They are more accurately referred to as ego defense mechanisms, and can thus be categorized as occurring when the id impulses are in conflict with each other, when the id impulses conflict with super-ego values and beliefs, and when an external threat is posed to the ego. (Jones, 1961)

The term "defense mechanism" is often thought to refer to a definitive singular term for personality traits which arise due to loss or traumatic experiences, but more accurately refers to several types of reactions which were identified during and after daughter Anna Freud's time. (Jones, 1961)

One such defense mechanism is displacement; Defense mechanism that shifts sexual or aggressive impulses to a more acceptable or less threatening target; redirecting emotion to a safer outlet; separation of emotion from its real object and redirection of the intense emotion toward someone or something that is less offensive or threatening in order to avoid dealing directly with what is frightening or threatening. For example, a mother may yell at her child because she is angry with her husband. (Hordon, 2008)

Rationale of study:

General contentment scale was developed to measure the degree of non-psychotic depression, in this research the purpose is to correlate general contentment with aggression in adult female population of university students, which is unique from previous studies, as focus of previous studies is on aggression or general contentment and no study is correlating aggression and general contentment.

There is a general observation that when a person is discontented s/he shows irritability or aggressiveness in his attitudes. This study is to give a scientific explanation of the observed trend

Objectives:

- To define correlation between general contentment and aggression in female university students
- To find correlation in family size and general contentment of female university students

III. METHOD

Hypothesis:

- Aggression is negatively correlated with general contentment in female university students
- General contentment level increases with family size. (number of siblings)

Sample:

Technique used in sampling: non-probability convenient sampling technique was utilized to collect the data

Sample comprised of female university students of international Islamic university, within an age range of 18 to 25 years.

Instruments:

Two questionnaire are used as an instrument to measure general contentment and aggression of sample

- Buss-Perry Questionnaire 1992; measures aggression. The questionnaire is attached as appendix 1
- General Contentment Scale developed by Hudson in 1982; measures non-psychotic depression. The questionnaire is attached as appendix 2.

A. Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire 1992

The Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ; Buss & Perry, 1992) represents a revision of the Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory (BDHI), including revisions of the response format and item content to improve clarity. Although, as with the Buss-Durkee scale, items for 6 a priori subscales were initially included in this measure, item-level factor analyses across three samples confirmed the presence of only 4 factors, involving Physical aggression, Verbal Aggression, Anger, and Hostility. Items which were included in a planned Resentment subscale appeared to load with Hostility (confirming the relationship between Suspicion and Resentment seen in the original Buss-Durkee), and the items from a planned Indirect Aggression subscale appeared to be distributed across the other factors. (Sharpe and Desai, 2001) 29-items, 5-point scale from 1 (extremely uncharacteristic of me) to 5 (extremely characteristic of me)

Internal and Test-Retest Reliability:

Internal consistency for the four subscales and total score range from .72 (Verbal Aggression) to .89 (Total BPAQ score). Retest reliability for the BPAQ over nine weeks is also satisfactory; correlations ranged from .72 for Anger to .80 for Physical Aggression and for the total score; (Buss & Perry, 1992).

Construct Validity:

Construct validity for the Buss-Perry subscales are supported, to some extent, by their relative associations with other self-report measures of personality traits. For example, the Buss and Plomin measure of Emotionality was related to Anger and Hostility subscales, but not to Physical or Verbal Aggression (Buss & Perry, 1992). In an additional study reported by Buss and Perry (1992), there were significant correlations reported between BPAQ scores and peer nominations relevant to each subscale, with the strongest correlations reported for the Physical Aggression scale (presumably the dimension most salient and observable by peers). Also relevant to the construct validity of the Buss-Perry, in the three college samples studied as part of the original report (total n = 1253), there were significant gender

differences for all of the scales except for Anger, with men scoring consistently higher than women, (Buss & Perry, 1992)

B. Generalized Contentment Scale:

The General Contentment Scale (Hudson & Proctor, 1977) measures the magnitude of non-psychotic depression, and consists of 25 items. It is a summated category partition scale that is scored on a range from 0 to 100. Positively and negatively worded items are used to counter response bias. Psychometric testing of the GCS was done on a sample of 124 persons of diverse occupations, and income and education levels. Test-retest and split-half reliability scores for the GCS ranged from .887 to .963, with a mean of .930. Also, the instrument showed good ability to differentiate between groups who described themselves as depressed and not depressed. Construct validity for the GCS has also been established. (Bryant and Smith, 2001)

Procedure:

The questionnaires in use; General contentment Scale and Aggression questionnaire were compiled in a form of a booklet; the booklet was providing to female students of international Islamic University Islamabad randomly. Students were assured for the confidentiality of the information being provided by them through the questionnaires; they were also assured that the data will be utilized only for research purpose.

The questionnaires were then recollected from the research participants and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

Reliability of general contentment, reliability of aggression, correlation of general contentment and aggression, and frequencies of demographic variables were found out.

According to Hudson (1982), the GCS not only possesses strong reliability and validity, it is also suited for repeated measures with the same client. Specifically, the GCS is short, easy to complete and score, and does not suffer from response decay when used repeatedly over time. For these reasons, the GCS has been chosen as a measure for this pretest, posttest experimental design. Hudson (1982) provides scoring procedures for the instrument, including procedures to use when the subject does not complete all items.

Statistical analysis:

Table 1: Total frequency of age, education level, number of siblings, day scholar. (N=60)

Variables	Frequency
Age	60
Education	60
Number of siblings	60
day scholars	60

Above Table 1 there are frequencies of age of students for a sample of 60, education level, number of siblings, day scholars/ hostilities as 60.

Table 2: Total frequency of age. (N=60)

Variables	Range	Frequency
Age	18	2
	19	8
	20	8
	21	21
	22	13
	23	4
	24	4

Above table 2 describes the total frequency of age of students for a sample of 60 which is highest for age of 21 years.

Table 3: Total frequency of education. (N=60)

Variable	Level	Frequency
Education	BBA	4
	MA/MS	15
	BS(hons)	38
	MS and above	3

Above table 3 describes the total frequency of education level of university students for a sample of 60, frequency is highest for BS (hons).

Table 4: Total frequency of number of siblings. (N=60)

Variable	Range	Frequency
No. of siblings	0	2
	1	3
	2	12
	3	20
	4	9
	5	8
	6	4
	7	2

Above table 4 describes the total frequency of number of siblings of students for a sample of 60, frequency is highest for 3 siblings.

Table 5: Reliability of aggression questionnaire on the score of students. (N=60)

Scale	No.of items	Reliability
Aggression questionnaire	60	0.84

Above table 6 shows the reliability of aggression questionnaire for a sample of 60; Reliability is 0.84 which is highly satisfactory.

Table 6: Reliability of General Contentment questionnaire on the scores of students. (N=60)

Scale	No. of items	Reliability
General Contentment questionnaire	60	0.787

Above table 6 represents reliability of General Contentment Scale for a sample of 60; Reliability is 0.787 which is highly satisfactory.

Table 7: Correlation of General Contentment scale, aggression questionnaire and its subscales; total physical, total verbal, total anger and total hostility on the scores of students. (N=60)

Scales	Total GC S	Total aggression	Total physical	Total verbal	Total anger	Total hostility
GCS	1	0.153	0.079	0.019	0.257*	0.109
Total aggression		1	0.792**	0.714**	0.786**	0.756**
Total physical			1	0.37*	0.502**	0.456**
Total verbal				1	0.499**	0.413**
Total anger					1	0.395**
Total hostility						1

**p>.01, *p>.05

Above table 8 describes the Correlation of General Contentment scale, aggression questionnaire and its subscales; total physical, total verbal, total anger and total hostility on the scores of student sample of 60. The correlation between GCS and Aggression questionnaire is very weak (0.15). The value of correlation between anger and GCS is calculated as 0.27 which is considered to be very weak. Correlation of verbal aggression and general contentment is (-0.019). Other variables like physical aggression (0.07) and hostility (0.1) have very weak correlation with GCS.

Table:8: Mean, Standard deviation-value on the scores of students on total General Contentment Scale, total aggression and sub scales of aggression. (N=60)

Scales	N	Mean	SD	T	P
Total GCS	60	56.6	13.39	0.38	0.12
Total aggression	60	81.23	17.5	0.14	0.08
Total physical	60	24.25	6.35	0.24	0.17
Total verbal	60	14.71	4.66	0.34	0.01
Total hostility	60	20.91	5.82	0.36	0.19
Total anger	60	21.25	5.72	0.60	0.51

Above table 9 shows Mean, Standard deviation, t-value on the scores of 60 students on total General Contentment Scale, total aggression and sub scales of aggression. No scale shows significant level except verbal aggression.

From this research project we got different results. We used two different scales one was generalized contentment scale and the other was Aggression scale. The reliability of General Contentment Scale is 0.78 which is highly satisfactory. Other scale used was Aggression Scale and reliability came out from our research sample is 0.84 and it is also highly satisfactory.

Purpose of our research was to find correlation between General Contentment and aggression. Our sample included both the students living in hostel and the day scholars. The number of students in hostel which were the part of our sample was 7 and day scholars were 53. Mean score of day scholars on the General contentment scale is greater than students in hostel. The standard deviation of day scholars on GCS is 13.39 and of students in hostel are 8.03. The t value is 0.38 and level of significance is 0.12 which is not considered significant. The mean scores of day scholars on total Aggression was counted as 80.56 and standard deviation is 17.5. The mean of total aggression in students in hostel was 81.57 and standard deviation calculated was 9.28.

Subscale of aggression; the physical aggression has mean 24.17 of day scholars and students in hostel have mean 23.57 and standard deviation of day scholars is 6.35 and of students in hostel is 4.57. The t value is 0.24 significance level is 0.17. The second subscale of aggression is verbal aggression. The mean of day scholars was 14.91 and standard deviation is 4.66. The mean of students in hostel is 14.29 and standard deviation was 1.78. The t value on Verbal aggression is 0.34. The third subscale of aggression is hostility. The mean of day scholars is 20.89 and standard deviation was 5.82. The mean of students in hostel is 21.71 and standard deviation is 4.23. The t value calculated was 0.36 and the value of level of significance was 0.19.

The last subscale of aggression is anger. The mean on anger of day scholars is 20.62 and mean of students in hostel is 19.57. The standard deviation of day scholars is 5.72 and students in hostel is 4.57.

IV. CONCLUSION

Suggestions:

Our sampling technique was non probability convenient sampling, which affects the results. By using any technique of probability, by increasing sample size, by expanding our research to different institutes, universities and employees, by doing research cross culturally, by doing research on children and adults, the outcome can be much better and could be generalized over large population. As the test measures general contentment so we can apply this on job satisfaction.

Limitations:

Our research was on limited sample, only female students so the sample was not the representative of population. The students faced difficulties in understanding the wordings of questionnaire.

REFERENCES

- [1] Goldberg, L.R., 1999 Personality Psychology in Europe Vol. 7, Tillburg University Press, Tillburg, The Netherlands, pp. 7–28.
- [2] Ericson. E. (1950) Childhood and Society.
- [3] Lopez S. J. (2009) Aggression. The Encyclopedia of Positive Psychology 45(5).1. Retrieved December, 26, 2010 from
- [4] http://www.ucm.es/info/Psi/docs/journal/v5_n1_2002/art45.pdf
- [5] Joireman, J., Anderson, J. and Strathman, A., 2003. The aggression paradox: Understanding links among aggression, sensation seeking, and the consideration of future consequences. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 84, pp. 1287–1302.
- [6] Van Wagner, K. (2010) Guide to Social Psychology About Psychology. Retrieved December 16, 2010 from <http://psychology.about.com/od/theoriesofaggression/guide>
- [7] The Spanish Journal of Psychology 2002, Vol. 5, No. 1, 45-53 1138-7416
- [8] Harris, J.A., 1997. A further evaluation of the Aggression Questionnaire: Issues of validity and reliability. Behavior Research and Therapy 35, pp. 1047–1053.
- [9] Frued.S (1923) The Ego and the Id.
- [10] Hordon. S (2008) Defence Mechanism retrieved December 16, 2010 from <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9029737/defense-mechanism>.
- [11] Sharpe, J.P. and Desai, S., 2001. The revised NEO Personality Inventory and the MMPI-2 psychopathology five in the prediction of aggression. Personality and Individual Differences 31, pp. 505–518.
- [12] Buss, A.H. and Perry, M., 1992. The Aggression Questionnaire. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 63, pp. 452–459