

# AGGRESSION AMONG ADOLESCENTS: A STUDY

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**ABSTRACT:** The present study intends to find out the attitude of senior secondary school students towards aggression. The study explores the effect of various demographic variables (gender, religion, place of living, educational qualification of father and educational qualification mother, occupation of father and occupation of mother, and economic status) on aggression among senior secondary school students. The study has been conducted on a sample of 311 senior secondary students of India (U.P Aligarh). The questionnaire prepared and standardized by the investigators has been used for the purpose. The data has been analyzed at two levels: first, measures of central tendency have been calculated and second inferential statistics have been applied to find out the significance of the difference. The results indicate that various demographic variables like gender, place of living, economic status have a significant effect on the attitude of the learners towards aggression. However, some demographic variables like religion, educational qualification of father and educational qualification mother, occupation of father and occupation of mother, do not make any difference in the attitude of learners towards aggression.

**KEYWORDS:** Aggression, Attitude & Senior Secondary Students

## INTRODUCTION

The term aggression comes from the Latin word "Aggressio" which means "attack" (Etymology Dictionary). Various researchers have defined the term aggression in their own way. Brown (1997) defines aggression as "the use of power by one or more people intentionally to harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or other". Baron and Byrne (1997) define aggression "as a behavior directed towards the goal of harming another living being." Similarly, Anderson (2002) defines aggression as a behavior, which causes intentional harm to another person. A perusal of these definitions lead us to conclude that aggression is a behavior, which indulges a person to harm others for own benefit to fulfill any desire. It refers to behavior, which intends to harm and injure others either verbally or physically.

## THEORIES REGARDING AGGRESSION

There are many theories regarding aggression, however, the present investigators describe only a few relevant ones in the present context.

**Evolutionary Theory:** Evolutionary theory is considered as the oldest theory as it advocates that animals are genetically equipped to protect themselves against any violence. They are naturally inclined to behave aggressively when something wrong happens. This theory explains aggression as an innate response. Even Lorenz (1966) supporting this theory observed that male animals use aggression and fight with other male animals to protect their children, and he believed that male are more aggressive. This theory has been criticized because he has observed animals only and the finding of the study cannot be applied over human population.

**Psychoanalytical Theory:** Freud (1910) also believed that aggression is innate. He was the first person to consider the concept of aggression as a personality attribute and believed that human behavior is fluctuated by drives and instincts.

Freud (1927) viewed that aggression is a part of Id, ego and superego and ideal image of human being opposes and represses aggression impulses.

This theory advocates that aggression cannot be eliminated but can be controlled by different ways. The indirect way of controlling aggression leads to catharsis and those who are unable to do so lead to aggressive behavior. According to this theory, human aggression is an instinctive drive related to the person and not the situation and therefore, an unavoidable part of human life (Glassman 2004).

**Social Learning Theory:** Albert Bandura (1977) developed this theory. He believed that aggression is acquired by direct observation or imitation of surrounding. It considers that aggression in children is due to more exposure of aggressive acts. It is believed that those who are more exposed to aggressive behavior are likely to be more aggressive than those who are not exposed to such situations. Bandura (1977) proposed that there are five main cognitive factors that mediate control of the aggressive behavior i.e. attention, retention, product, motivation, and self-efficacy. He believed that family members are the important source of behavior modeling. Parents are the role model of children. They copy the behavior of their parents. For example, if a boy who experiences fight between his parents is more likely to become an abusive husband. In addition, he also proposed that media also plays an important role in modifying child's behavior either positively or negatively.

A perusal of these theories emphasizes one or the other side of a same coin. Basically, aggression is the result of a number of variables, which are responsible for aggressive activities. Below are given various causes of aggression:

## CAUSES OF AGGRESSION

A large number of researches have been conducted by various psychologists (Mabilta 2006, Renfrew, W.1997 Bandura 1977 etc.) to find out the root causes of aggression. However, psychologist agrees that no single factor is responsible for aggression among learners. Based on the observation by various psychologists, below are given the major causes responsible for aggression among learners.

**Biological causes-** Biological causes are related to the internal functioning of the body. First, it is estimated that poor brain functioning is the real cause of aggression. However, sometime sex hormones are also considered the reason behind aggressive behavior. If the testosterone is increased to higher level, it makes a person more aggressive.

**Family causes-** Children spend most of the time with family members. They learn values and behavior from the parental behavior such as moral, problem solving techniques etc. In addition, in the same way, children adapt parent's aggressive behavior. It is the fact that children get affected emotionally, socially, physically and behaviorally due to domestic violence. According to social learning theory, if a child experiences aggression in the family, he/she easily adapts the same behavior and may manifest the same in public.

**Environmental causes-** It is true that most of the time children are influenced by the society. Community plays a key role in making a child aggressive. Generally, it has been observed that if adolescents do not get right advice and support from adults they may commit mistakes. Sometimes, they set high ambition of life and try to follow their role model and if they are unable to do so, they become aggressive. Media may also play a major role in enhancing aggressive behavior. According to social learning theory, aggressive behavior is acquired by the learner through observational experiences.

**3.4. Social causes-** It is observed in many schools that teacher terrify the students for numberless reasons, which develop intolerance and fear in the mind of the learner and make them aggressive, to take revenge with teacher. Besides this, the other school related causes may be negative reinforcement from teacher, failure in studies, neglect by peers etc.

## TYPES OF AGGRESSION

Manifestation of aggression includes a variety of behavior. Some of the common types proposed by various researchers (Berk, L 1999, Moyer 1976) are given below:

- 1) **Verbal Aggression**- It is not the direct form of aggression. It refers to communication aiming to insult or hurt other person, and tries to give psychological pain. It includes scolding, teasing, mockery, verbal abuse etc.
- 2) **Physical Aggression**-Physical aggression is behavior, which intends to harm or injure others physically or damage different parts of a body. It includes kicking, molesting, pushing, hair pulling, shooting and so on.
- 3) **Emotional Aggression**- Emotional aggression is a behavior that is accompanied by the negative emotions and often occurs with small amount of vision and is determined by impulsive emotions.
- 4) **Instrumental Aggression**-Instrumental aggression refers to a behavior where the main aim is to achieve some external goal. The main purpose of this type aggression is achieving some rewards. It is also known as proactive aggression. Robbery, shoplifting, bombing cities etc. are the examples of instrumental aggression.
- 5) **Relational Aggression**-Relational Aggression means not to harm other person physically, but by broken relationship or causing damage to social status or prestige such as threatening to end a friendship, backbiting etc.

## AGGRESSION IN INDIA

Now a days, it is a common phenomenon to find adolescents being involved in aggressive activities frequently. It is a matter of great concern for all including parents, teachers, psychologists, social reformers and others. Sometimes involvement in aggressive activities may be fatal for the victim as well as for the doer. Momentary expression of anger sometimes may spoil the future life of the adolescents. Increasing number of incident increase the concern all the more. Newspapers are full of such incidents involving adolescents in aggression, For example: in Chennai, a 17-year-old boy was stoned to death by a former classmate in front of a school due to ego problem. Similarly, a student of eighth class brought a knife in the class to take revenge with the teacher because she scolded him in front of the class.

Endless list of similar incidents may be quoted. In advanced countries, children carry weapons in their bags. But in our country, children do not require external weapons rather they use things of daily usage, like pencil, compass, cricket bat etc. to serve their purpose. Although children below 18 years of age are treated as Juvenile delinquent but involvement of juveniles in serious incidents of crime has led the country to revise its existing law, which defines punishment according to the intensity of the crime.

Keeping these alarming situation incidents in mind, the investigators feel it necessary to investigate the attitude of senior secondary school students towards aggression, so that timely action may be undertaken to avoid certain drastic situations.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Although a number of studies have been conducted in India to assess aggressive behavior of adolescents in relation to various demographic variables. However, the present investigators describe a few most relevant studies related with the area.

**Malviya (1968)** conducted a study on aggression and found that males are more aggressive than females. **Goyal and Gupta (2009)** studied the impact of modernization on aggression and found significant gender difference. Similarly, **Kumar (2011)** studied aggression and found significant difference in aggressive attitude in relation to self-esteem, gender, and family. **Rana (2011)** studied aggression in relation to emotional competence and found no impact of the variable on aggression. **Sangwan (2011)** studied aggression in relation to, life satisfaction, depression and well-being in rural and urban teenager boys and found that urban boys are significantly higher on aggression in comparison to rural boys. Similarly, **Devi (2012)** and **Kumar (2012)** studied aggression and found gender to be playing an important role in determining aggression. Similar finding were attained by **Kumar and Malik (2012)** and **Sood (2012)**.

A perusal of these studies reveal that aggression has been studied Kumar (2011), Rana (2011), Sangwan (2011) in relation to various cognitive variables studies (self-esteem, emotional competence, and depression self-concept). A few researchers Malviya (1968), Goyal and Gupta (2009), Devi (2012), Kumar (2012), Kumar and Malik (2012) and Sood (2012) have also studied aggression in relation to various demographic variables, like gender, religion, place of living, educational qualification of father and educational of qualification mother, occupation of father and occupation of mother, economic status etc. The present study is aimed at investigating the impact of certain demographics variables (gender, religion, place of living, educational qualification of father and educational qualification of mother, occupation of father and occupation of mother, and economic status) on aggression among senior secondary school students. Briefly the objectives of the present study are:

1. To find out the level of aggression among senior secondary school students.
2. To find out the level of aggression among senior secondary school students in relation to various demographic variables like gender, religion, place of living, educational qualification of father and educational qualification mother, occupation of father and occupation of mother, and economic status.

## METHODOLOGY

In the present study, all senior secondary level students comprise the population of the study. Since it is not possible to collect the data on the population, therefore, non-probability purposive method has been applied to select the sample. The data has been collected on 311 senior secondary school students belonging to Aligarh district only. The details of the sample are given in the following table (1.1).

**Table 1.1: Details of the sample included in the study**

NAME OF THE SCHOOL	MALE	FEMALE	TOATL
ALIGARH PUBLIC SCHOOL	22	47	69
SENIOR SECODARY SCHOOL (BOYS)AMU	64	–	64
WISDOM PUBLIC SCHOOL	66	50	116
ALBARKAT PUBLIC SCHOOL(GIRLS WING)	–	62	62
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>311</b>

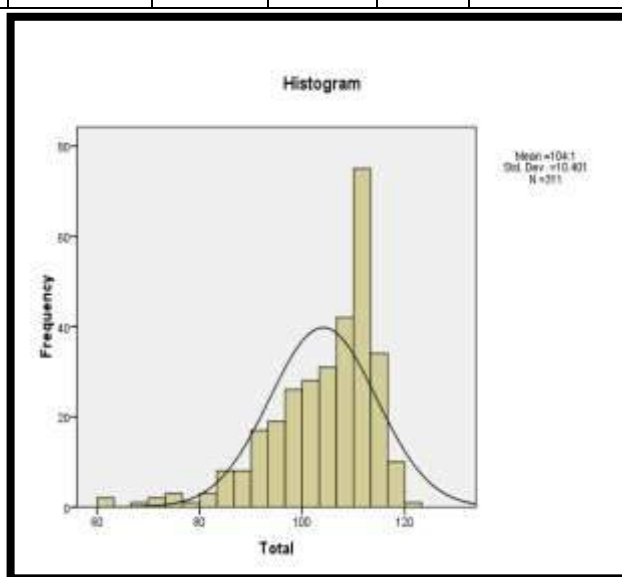
In order to carry out the study, the researchers prepared a standardized questionnaire ‘Attitude towards Aggression’ consisting of 40 items related to with the attitude of senior secondary school students towards aggression. The validity of tool was estimated through the procedures suggested by Edward (1969) and Pearson correlation Coefficient and reliability was estimated through Cronbach’s Alpha (.848). Thus, the tool possesses good reliability and validity parameters.

## DATA PROCESSING:

After collecting the data, the results were drawn with the help of SPSS. The analysis was conducted at two levels. At the first level, basic statistics like measures of central tendencies and variability were computed. At the second level, significance of difference between means was computed. The following tables and subsequent interpretation presents a detailed description of the analysis in relation to various demographic variables (gender, religion, place of living, educational qualification of father and educational qualification mother, occupation of father and occupation of mother, and economic status).

**Table 1.2:** Statistics showing attitude of senior secondary students towards aggression

N	Assumed Mean	Mean	Median	Mode	s.d.	S.E.	Skewness	kurtosis	t value	Sig.
311	80	104.10	107.00	112	10.40	.590	-1,301	2.05	40.85	.00

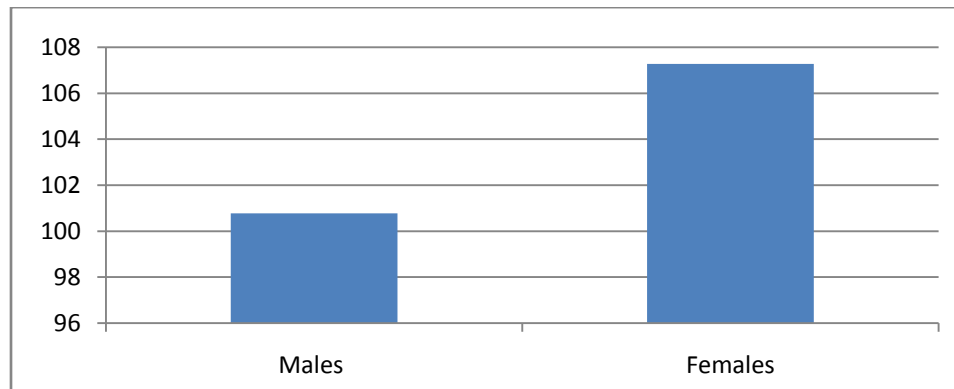
**Figure 1.1.** Distribution of mean scores of senior secondary students towards aggression

### Interpretation

The table 1.2 and its corresponding figure (1.1) depicts that the mean score of the sample is 104.10, which means that attitude of aggression among secondary school students is average. The standard error of mean is .590, which implies that the sample mean is deviating from the population mean by .590. Mode is 112 i.e. it is the most occurring score in the sample. Standard deviation is 10.4, which shows that the scores can deviate from the mean by 10.4 on both positive and negative side. Skewness of the sample is -1.301 and it indicates that the sample is negatively skewed i.e., the scores are massed at the higher end of scale (the right end) and spread out gradually at the low or left end of the scale. The value of kurtosis is 2.054, which indicates that the curve is leptokurtic. When compared with assumed mean, the t value is significant at .01 level. This shows that there is higher level of aggression among students.

**Table 1.3:** Statistics showing attitude of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to gender

Gender	N	Mean	s.d.	F	Level of significance
Male	152	100.77	11.654	33.614	.000
Female	159	107.28	7.851		



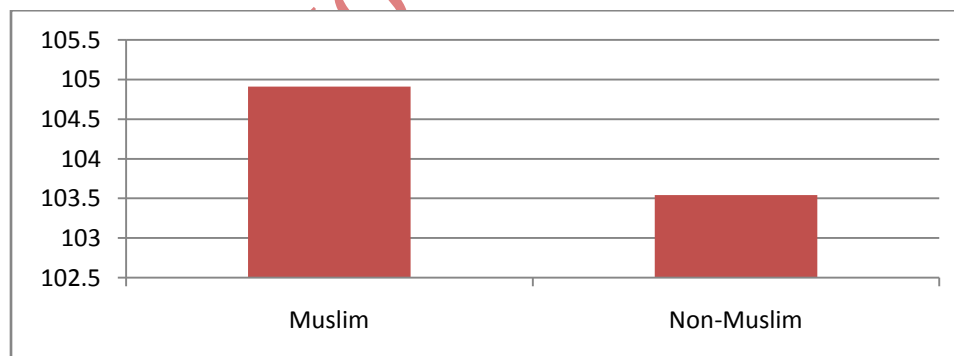
**Figure 1.2.** Distribution of mean scores of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to gender

### Interpretation

The table 1.3 and its corresponding figure (1.2) shows that the mean score of females (107.28) is higher than the mean score (100.77) of their male counterparts on the variable of aggression. The  $f$  ratio (33.614) reveals that the difference between these two mean scores is not just by chance and males and females differ significantly on their level of aggression. Thus, we can say that gender has significant impact on the aggression level of senior secondary school students. The findings of this variable confirm the results of Sood (2012), Devi (2012) and Kumar and Malik (2012).

**Table 1.4:** Statistics showing attitude of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to religion

Religion	N	Mean	s.d.	F	Level of significance
Muslim	127	104.91	9.243	1.300	.255
Non-Muslim	184	103.54	11.121		



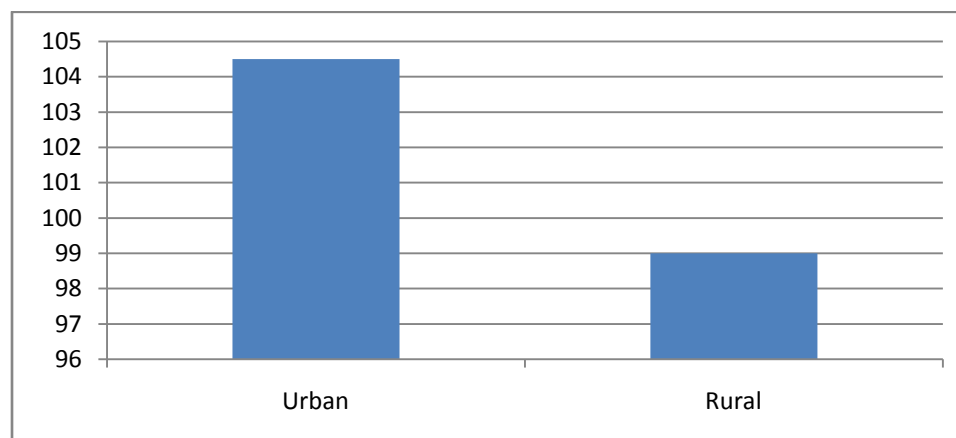
**Figure 1.3.** Distribution of mean scores of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to religion

### Interpretation

The table 1.4 and its corresponding figure (1.3) shows that the mean score of Muslim students (104.91) is higher than the mean score (103.54) of their non-Muslim counterparts. The difference between these two mean scores is just by chance as the  $f$  (1.300) value is not significant. It indicates that Muslim and non-Muslims senior secondary students do not differ significantly on their level of aggression. Thus, we can arrive at a conclusion that religion has insignificant effect on the aggression level of senior secondary students. However, the findings of Malviya (1968) are in sharp contrast with the findings of the present study.

**Table 1.5:** Statistics showing attitude of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to place of living

Place of living	N	Mean	s.d.	F	Level of significance
Urban	291	104.5	10.386	5.201	.021
Rural	20	99.00	9.453		



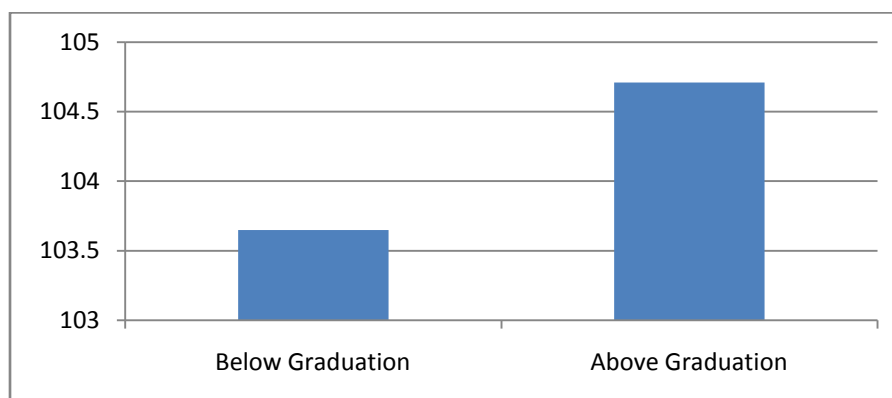
**Figure 1.4:** Distribution of mean scores of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to place of living

### Interpretation

It is clear from the table (1.5) and its corresponding figure (1.4) that the mean score of urban students is (104.45) is higher than the mean score (99.00) of their rural counterparts on the variable of aggression. The f value (5.201) shows that the difference between these two mean scores is not just by chance and urban and rural senior secondary students differ significantly on their level of aggression. Thus, we can conclude that the place of living significantly affects the aggression level of senior secondary students. The findings of the present study are in consensus with the result of the study carried out by Sangwan (2011).

**Table 1.6:** Statistics showing attitude of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to the educational level of their father

Education level of father	N	Mean	s.d.	F	Level of significance
Below Graduation	180	103.65	9.721	.787	.376
Above Graduation	131	104.71	11.279		



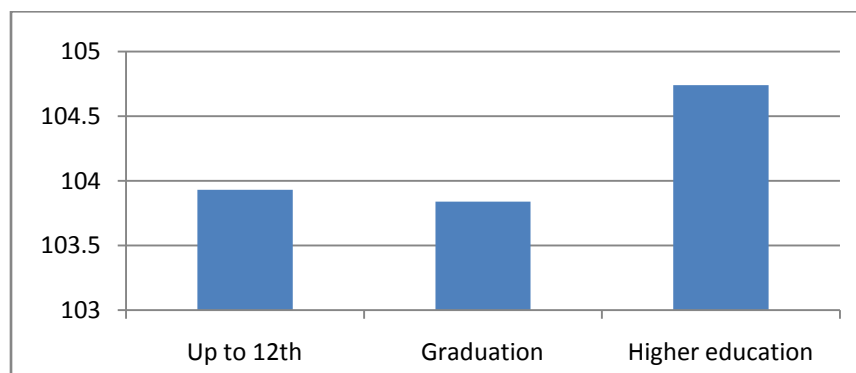
**Figure 1.5:** Distribution of mean scores of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to educational level of their father

## Interpretation

It is depicted from the table (1.6) and its corresponding figure (1.5) that there is insignificant difference in the attitude of aggression of the senior secondary students in relation to the qualification of their father. The figure (1.5) depicts that those students whose parents have higher level of education (above graduation level) have higher aggression in comparison to those students whose parents have education below graduation level. Since f value (.787) is not significant, it indicates that for the present sample educational level of father has no meaning. Thus, we can say that educational level of father does not have any impact on the level of aggression of senior secondary school students.

**Table 1.7:** Statistic showing the attitude of senior secondary students in relation to the educational level of their mother

Education level of Mother	N	Mean	s.d.	F	Level of significance
Up to 12 <sup>th</sup>	101	103.93	9.094	.203	.817
Graduation	132	103.84	11.257		
Higher education	78	104.74	10.582		



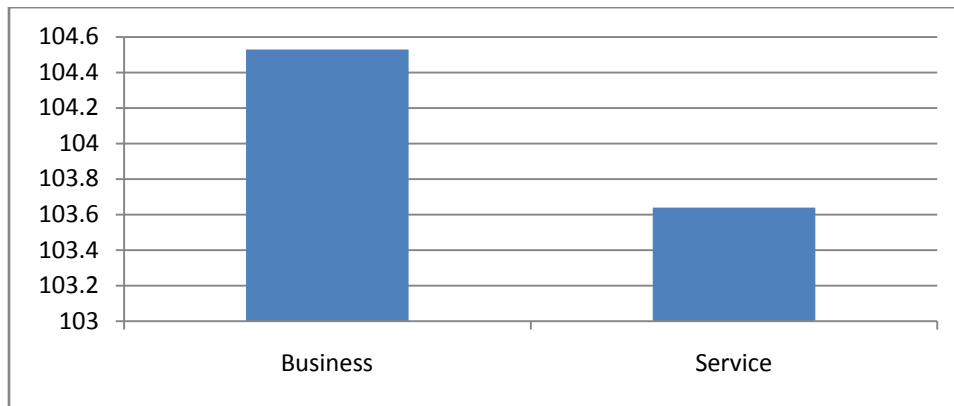
**Figure 1.6:** Distribution of mean scores of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to the educational level of their mother

## Interpretation

It is depicted from the table (1.7) and its corresponding figure (1.6) that there is insignificant difference in the attitude of aggression of the senior secondary students in relation to the educational qualification of their mother. The figure (1.6) depicts that those students whose mothers have higher education possess higher level of aggression in comparison to those counterparts whose mothers' educational level is either up to graduation or below graduation. Since f value (.203) is insignificant, it indicates that educational status of mother does not affect the level of aggression among senior secondary students. Briefly, we can say that educational level of mother does not affect the level of aggression among senior secondary students.

**Table 1.8:** Statistics showing the attitude of senior secondary students in relation to the profession of their father

Profession of Father	N	Mean	s.d.	F	Level of significance
Business	160	104.53	10.441	.575	.449
Service	151	103.64	10.373		



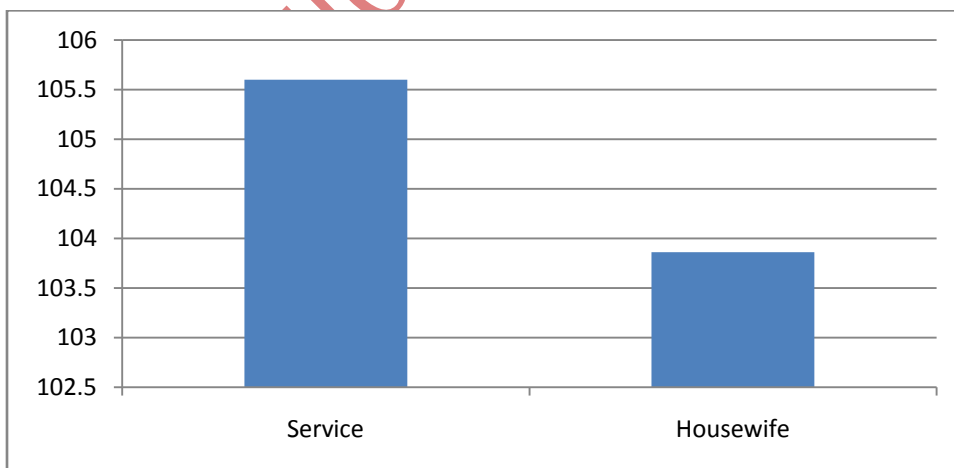
**Figure 1.7:** Distribution of mean scores of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to the profession of their father

**Interpretation**

It is depicted from the table (1.8) and its corresponding figure (1.7) that there is insignificant difference in the attitude of aggression of the senior secondary students in relation to the occupation of their father. The figure (1.7) depicts that those students whose father are businessman possess high level of aggression in comparison to those whose father are in service. Since f value (.575) is not significant, it indicates that occupation of father does not affect the level of aggression among senior secondary students. Briefly, it can be concluded that occupation of father has nothing to do with the level of aggression among senior secondary students.

**Table 1.9** Statistics showing the attitude of senior secondary students in relation to the profession of their mother

Profession of Mother	N	Mean	s.d.	F	Level of significance
Service	42	105.60	9.438	1.008	.316
Housewife	269	103.86	10.541		



**Figure 1.8:** Distribution of mean scores of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to the profession of their mother

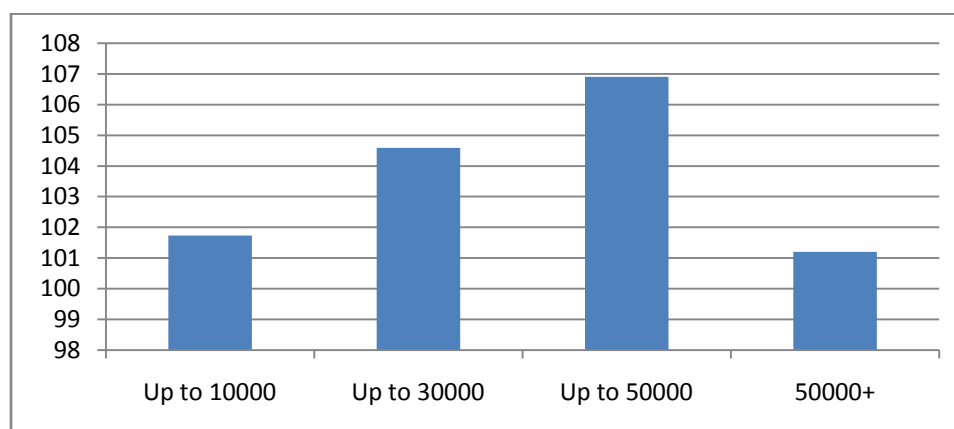
**Interpretation**

It is depicted from the table (1.9) and its corresponding figure (1.8) that there is insignificant difference in the attitude of aggression of the senior secondary students in relation to the occupation of their mother. The figure (1.8) depicts that those students whose mothers are in service possess high level of aggression in comparison to those whose mothers are housewife. Since f value (1.008) is not significant, it indicates that occupation of mother does not affect the level of

aggression among senior secondary students. Briefly, it can be concluded that occupation of mother has nothing to do with the level of aggression among senior secondary students.

**Table 1.10:** Statistics showing the attitude of senior secondary students in relation to the family income per month

Family Income per Month	N	Mean	s.d.	F	Level of significance
Up to 10000	56	101.73	11.159	4.093	.007
Up to 30000	139	104.59	9.844		
Up to 50000	70	106.91	7.434		
50000+	46	101.20	13.510		



**Figure 1.9:** Distribution of mean scores of senior secondary students towards aggression in relation to the family income of the family.

### Interpretation

It is depicted from the table (1.10) and its corresponding figure (1.9) that there is a significant difference in the attitude of senior secondary students on the basis of the family income (per month) (i.e., up to 1000, up to 30000, up to 50000, up to 50000+). The figure (1.9) depicts that those students whose family income is up to 50000 per month possess higher level of aggression in comparison to those whose family income is less than this. Since f value (4.093) is significant at the specified level, it indicates that in the present sample family income per month affects the level of aggression among senior secondary students.

**CONCLUSION:** The findings of the present study reveal that an average senior secondary school student has high level of aggression i.e. senior secondary school students possess higher aggressive tendencies. The researchers found that gender plays significant role in determining the level of aggression. The results indicate that females are more aggressive than males. This finding is against the popular belief that males are more aggressive. There may be many reasons for such results. In the present day society, adolescents are exposed to electronic media. Children play most of the time on mobile phones and internet. On media, there are a large number of games depicting violence and glorifying the violent activities. Exposure to such programmes is the main reason among adolescents for higher level of aggressive tendencies. Another variable having significant impact on the aggression is place of living; urban students are more aggressive than their rural counterparts. Here also media seems to be playing an important role. The others variables having significant impact on aggressive behavior on students is family income per month. Those students whose family has higher income per month are more aggressive. The reason for such results may be availability of electronic facility at home, which in turn again related with exposure to media. There is a list of causes, which are responsible for aggression among adolescents such as, autocratic attitude of parents, poor adult supervision, rejection by the peer groups, experience of academic failure, trend of

nuclear family, loneliness of children etc. Moreover, the continuous use of mobile phones and internet for long time may also be held responsible for aggression among learners. Now it is the time to think about it seriously. The teachers, psychologists, parents, society as a whole should do something to prevent aggressive tendencies among learners. For example, value based education should be emphasized. Teachers, parents, and other member of the society etc. should present their own example. Adolescents require a little bit more time and touching care of parents, teachers and society. It is not only the responsibility of parents but of school, home and society as a whole to put a check on aggression tendencies among learners. Only then, we may have a society in which every member is contributing his best.

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