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Aggression: Is it more by Accident than Design?

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ABSTRACT

Among deviant human behaviours in the society, aggression appears to be the most prevalent and perturbing. This is because aggressive behaviour is displayed everywhere in the society. Adolescents in the senior secondary schools have to interact with the school environment, administrators, teachers and fellow students. Also, they have to interact with parents and siblings at home. Negative or adverse experiences they encounter in the course of these interactions could trigger negative psychological feelings which may lead to aggressive behaviours in the schools. Hence, this research work aims at investigating the determining effect of psychological factors such as stress, self-concept and locus of control on aggressive behaviours among adolescents in senior secondary students of Aligarh. The sample of the study consisted of 177 students (92 girls and 85 boys). The tools used were Locus of control scale (LOC) by Rotter and Aggressive behaviour scale (ABS) constructed by Sameer Babu. The result revealed that there was no significant correlation between locus of control and aggression in the total sample. Majority of the male respondents had internal locus of control and female respondent showed more of external locus of control. Boys were found to be more aggressive than girls. Another finding revealed that the Backward Class category scored higher on aggression than the general category.

KEYWORDS: aggression, internal locus of control, external locus of control, adolescence

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of Locus of Control was developed by Julian Rotter in the 1960s. He named this concept as Locus of Control of Reinforcement. Rotter actually bridged the gap between Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology. He believed that behavior was greatly guided by the use of reinforcements. Individuals' belief about the controllability of what happens to them is a core element of their understanding of how they live in the world¹.

Those individuals with *Internal Locus of Control* believe that reinforcements are a result of personal effort, whereas individuals with an *External Locus of Control* believe that reinforcement occur as a result of forces outside their personal control. Individuals with an internal Locus of Control experience reinforcements of value as more meaningful or influential to them because they believe that they have control over reinforcements; to increase or decrease the reinforcement, they change their behavior. On the other hand, individuals with an external Locus of Control are less likely to change their behavior because they do not believe that changing their behavior would have an effect on the reinforcements. Instead, they believe that what happens to them is primarily due to luck, chance, fate, or powerful others.

Manifestation of aggressive behaviour is one of the major problems associated with adolescents in the senior secondary schools today. The pervading incidence of aggressive behaviour among senior secondary school students is alarming. Gould's study, cited in Eziyi and Odoemela revealed that aggressive behaviour is "one of the most frustrating issues parents and teachers face, and that is normal in young children who do not yet understand that it is wrong and more importantly why it is wrong"². Obviously, some adolescents in these secondary schools exhibit one form of aggressive behaviour or the other.

Aggressive behaviour among adolescents in secondary schools takes various forms. It can be physical or verbal. Physical aggression refers to inflicting injury on others, while verbal aggression entails using words that are intended to harm another person. Aggressive behaviour among adolescents in secondary schools sometimes takes the form of an over-reaction, screaming, shouting or becoming very agitated as a result of a very minor setback².

1.1 Significance of the study

Adolescents in the senior secondary schools have to interact with the school environment, administrators, teachers and fellow students. Also, they have to interact with parents and siblings at home. Negative or adverse experiences they encounter in the course of these interactions could trigger negative psychological feelings which may lead to aggressive behaviours in the schools. Hence, this research work aims at investigating the determining effect of psychological factors such

as stress, self-concept and locus of control on aggressive behaviours among adolescents in senior secondary students of Aligarh. Locus of control is other variable to be investigated in this study. Locus of control is a personality trait that governs individuals to attribute their failures or successes to either internal or external factors³. One can have either internal or external locus of control and this has serious impact on one's behaviour. This variable may have serious effects on aggressiveness among adolescents. Hence, it will be revealing to investigate in this study the relationship between the Locus of Control and Aggression among senior secondary schools.

This study may be significant in providing a clear picture to faculty members at the schools, university, parents and, counsellors on the extent and causes of aggression, to understand this deeply, and enable them to develop treatment, prevention, and intervention programmes to reduce this phenomenon as much as possible and develop strategies for enhancing internal locus of control and reducing aggression in troubled adolescent students.

1.2 Research questions

- Whether there is any relationship between academic locus of control and aggression among senior secondary students?
- Are senior secondary boys more aggressive than the girls?
- How far do the senior secondary students differ in their locus of control?
- If one believes in his ability to control life events how far is he in controlling his aggression?
- Does being aggressive have any connection to the locality we live in?
- Will one's socio-economic status instigate aggressive behaviour in oneself?

1.3 Objectives

The objectives formulated for the study are:

1. To identify the relationship between locus of control and aggression among the total sample of senior secondary students and its sub sample (gender).
2. To find out the significant difference in the mean scores of locus of control between senior secondary boys and girls.
3. To find out the significant difference in the mean scores of locus of control between rural and urban senior secondary students.
4. To find out the significant difference in the mean scores of locus of control between general and OBC senior secondary students.
5. To find out the significant difference in the mean scores of locus of control between Muslim and Non-Muslim senior secondary students.

6. To find out the significant difference in the mean scores of aggression between senior secondary students boys and girls.
7. To find out the significant difference in the mean scores of aggression between rural and urban senior secondary students.
8. To find out the significant difference in the mean scores of aggression between general and OBC category senior secondary students.
9. To find out the significant difference in the mean scores of aggression between Muslim and Non- Muslim senior secondary students.
10. To identify the types of locus of control in the total sample of senior secondary students and its sub sample (gender).

1. METHOD

1.1 Sample

The sample of the study consisted of 177 students (92 girls and 85 boys), in 92 girls 48 were from science, 21 were from commerce, and 23 were from arts. In 85 boys 44 were from science, 19 were from commerce, and 22 were from arts. The whole samples of students were collected from Aligarh Muslim University Aligarh. The sample was selected through simple random sampling.

1.2 Tools

1.2.1 Locus of control scale (LOC)

To measure the locus of control of senior secondary school students, “Locus of control scale” (LOC) was used in this study. It was constructed by Julian Rotter. It contained 29 items in which a high score was external locus of control and a low score was internal locus of control. It contained positive as well as negative statements⁴.

2.2.2 Aggressive Behaviour Scale (ABS)

To measure aggressive behaviour of senior secondary school students, aggressive behaviour scale (ABS) was used, constructed by Sameer Babu M. This scale contained 42 items. For the present study the following forms/ dimensions of aggressive behavior have been taken into consideration. It has been modelled into six various dimensions of aggressive behavior under two broad areas viz. overt and relational aggression⁵.

2. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1:

There will be no significant relationship between locus of control and aggression among the total sample of senior secondary students and its sub sample (gender).

Table-1. Correlation between locus of control and aggression

Variables	Sample	N	Mean	SD	Correlation	Level of Significance
Locus of Control	Total	177	1.6	15.20	- 0.132	Not significant
			89.27	.490		
Aggression	Girls	93	1.55	.499	- 0.316**	Significant at 0.05 Level
			85.98	12.90		
Aggression	Boys	84	1.65	.47	- 0.022	Not significant
			92.91	16.72		

**Correlation significant at 0.01 level

Interpretation

According to table 1, there is no significant correlation between locus of control and aggression in the total sample $r(175) = -.132$, $p = 0.399$ similar result is displayed for the male sample, there is no significant correlation among the variables. $r(82) = -.023$, $p = 0.380$ but for the female sample statistically significant negative correlation was found among the locus of control and aggression variables $r(91) = -0.316$, $p = 0.00$ at 0.01 level.

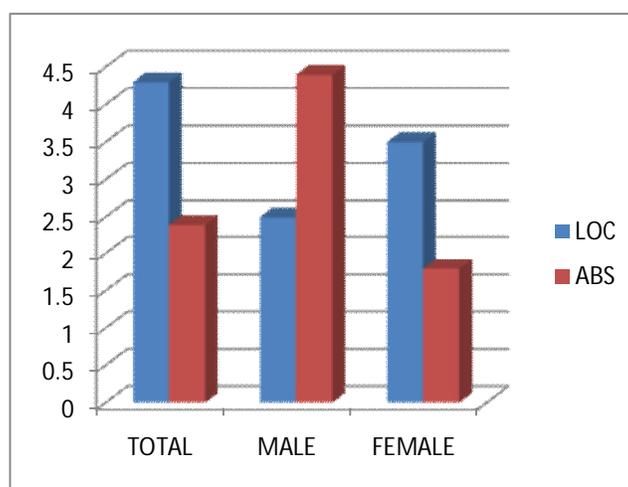


Figure-1 LOC and ABS of total sample and its sub-sample

Hypothesis 2:

There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of locus of control between senior secondary boys and girls.

Table-2. Mean scores of locus of control of boys and girls

Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	L.O.S	H ₀ (A/R)
Boys	84	1.65	0.47	175	1.29	1.96	0.05	A
Girls	93	1.55	0.49			2.58	0.01	A

L.O.S- Level of Significance

A/R- Hypothesis Accepted/Rejected

Interpretation

Table - 2 sheds the light that calculated value of ‘t’ (1.29) is less than the tabulated ‘t’ value (1.96 & 2.58) at both levels of significance (0.05 & 0.01 respectively). So the null hypothesis is accepted and it shows that there is no significant difference between senior secondary boys and girls in their locus of control.

Hypothesis 3:

There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of locus of control between rural and urban senior secondary students.

Table-3. Mean scores of locus of control of rural and urban locality

Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	L.O.S	H ₀ (A/R)
Urban	136	1.60	0.49	175	.078	1.96	0.05	A
Rural	41	1.60	0.49			2.58	0.01	A

L.O.S- Level of Significance

A/R- Hypothesis Accepted/Rejected

Interpretation

Table - 3 displays that calculated value of ‘t’ (0.78) is less than the tabulated ‘t’ value (1.96 & 2.58) at both levels of significance (0.05 & 0.01 respectively). So the null hypothesis is accepted and it shows that there is no significant difference between urban and rural in their locus of control.

Hypothesis 4:

There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of locus of control between general and OBC senior secondary students.

Table-4. Mean scores of locus of control of general and OBC.

Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	L.O.S	H ₀ (A/R)
General	107	1.57	0.49	174	0.76	1.9	0.05	A
OBC	69	1.63	0.48			2.58	0.01	A

L.O.S- Level of Significance

A/R- Hypothesis Accepted/Rejected

Interpretation

Table – 4 displays that calculated value of ‘t’ (.76) is less than the tabulated ‘t’ value (1.96 & 2.58) at both levels of significance (0.05 & 0.01 respectively). So the null hypothesis is accepted and it shows that there is no significant difference between general and OBC in their locus of control.

Hypothesis 5:

There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of locus of control between Muslim and Non-Muslim senior secondary students.

Table-5. Mean scores of locus of control of Muslim and Non-Muslim.

Group	N	Mean	S.D	Df	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	L.O.S	H ₀ (A/R)
Muslim	150	1.60	0.49	175	0.28	1.96	0.05	A
Non-Muslim	27	1.62	0.49			2.58	0.01	A

L.O.S- Level of Significance

A/R- Hypothesis Accepted/Rejected

Interpretation

According to Table – 5 that calculated value of ‘t’ (0.288) is less than the tabulated ‘t’ value (1.96 & 2.58) at both levels of significance (0.05 & 0.01 respectively). So the null hypothesis is accepted and it shows that there is no significant difference between Muslim and Non-Muslim in their locus of control.

Hypothesis 6:

There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of aggression between senior secondary boys and girls students.

Table-6. Mean scores of aggression between boys and girls

Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	L.O.S	H ₀ (A/R)
Boys	84	92.91	16.72	175	3.10	1.96	0.05	R
Girls	93	85.98	12.90			2.58	0.01	R

L.O.S- Level of Significance

A/R- Hypothesis Accepted/Rejected

Interpretation

It is depicted from the table - 6 that the calculated value of ‘t’ (3.10) is greater than the tabulated ‘t’ value (1.96 & 2.58) at both levels of significance (0.05 & 0.01 respectively). So the null hypothesis is rejected and it shows that there is significant difference between boys and girls in their aggressive behaviour. It further shows that boys are more aggressive than girls as the mean score of the boys (M= 92.91) is greater than the mean score of girls (M= 85.98).

Hypothesis 7:

There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of aggression between rural and urban senior secondary students.

Table-7. Mean scores of aggression between rural and urban

Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	L.O.S	H ₀ (A/R)
Urban	136	88.74	14.99	175	0.851	1.96	0.05	A
Rural	41	91.04	15.93			2.58	0.01	A

L.O.S- Level of Significance

A/R- Hypothesis Accepted/Rejected

Interpretation

Table – 7 reveals that calculated value of ‘t’ (0.851) is less than the tabulated ‘t’ value (1.96 & 2.58) at both levels of significance (0.05 & 0.01 respectively). So the null hypothesis is accepted and it shows that there is no significant difference between urban and rural in their aggressive behaviour.

Table- 8. Mean scores of aggression between general and OBC

Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	L.O.S	H ₀ (A/R)
General	107	87.57	14.72	174	1.99	1.96	0.05	R
OBC	69	92.20	15.51			2.58	0.01	R

L.O.S- Level of Significance

A/R- Hypothesis Accepted/Rejected

Hypothesis 8:

There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of aggression between general and OBC category senior secondary students.

Interpretation

Table – 8 displays that calculated value of ‘t’ (1.99) is greater than the tabulated ‘t’ value (1.96) at level of significance (0.05). So the null hypothesis is rejected and it shows that there is significant difference between OBC and general in their aggressive behaviour. It further shows that OBC are more aggressive than general as the mean score of the OBC (M= 92.20) is greater than the mean score of general (M= 87.57).

Hypothesis 9:

There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of aggression between Muslim and Non- Muslim senior secondary students.

Table- 9: Mean scores of aggression between Muslim and Non-Muslim

Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	Calculated tvalue	Tabulated t-value	L.O.S	H ₀ (A/R)
Muslim	150	88.36	15.13	175	1.89	1.96	0.05	A
Non-Muslim	27	94.33	14.85			2.58	0.01	A

L.O.S- Level of Significance

A/R- Hypothesis Accepted/Rejected

Interpretation

According to table - 9 the calculated value of ‘t’ (1.89) is less than the tabulated ‘t’ value (1.96 & 2.58) at both levels of significance (0.05 & 0.01 respectively). So the null hypothesis is accepted and it shows that there is no significant difference between Muslim and Non-Muslim senior secondary students in their aggressive behaviour.

Objective No. 10

To identify the types of locus of control in the total sample of senior secondary students and its sub sample (gender).

Table-10. Percentage of locus of control in the total sample of senior secondary students and its sub sample (gender).

Sample	External Locus of Control	Internal Locus of Control
Total	39.5%	60.4%
Boys	34.5%	65.4%
Girls	44%	55.91%

Interpretation

From the table-10, it is interpreted that approximately 40% of the senior secondary students have external locus of control and the rest 60.4% of them have internal locus of control in the total sample of 177 students. And 34.5% boys have external and 65.4% have internal locus of control. 60% of girl students have internal locus of control and 44% have external locus of control.

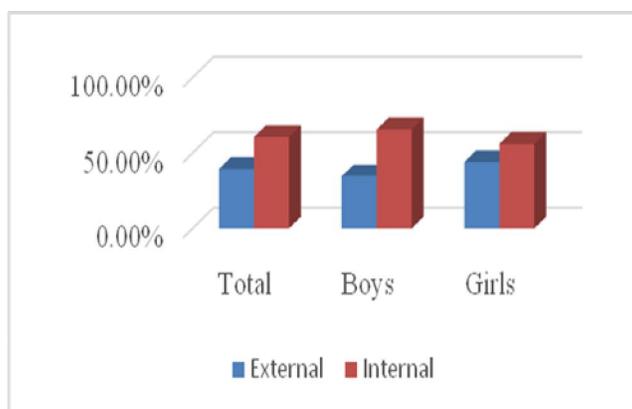


Figure -2 Internal and External Locus of control of the total sample and the sub-sample

3.1 Discussion

There was no significant correlation between locus of control and aggression in the total sample. It was found that maximum respondents of total sample had internal locus of control (60.4%). The individuals who have the internal locus of control, think that they have a big role on affecting the events which influence their lives. Furthermore, they assess themselves as possessing the power for the attitude they want to display by having a positive ego concept and they believe that they can direct their lives whatever may they desire. 39.6% of the respondents in the total sample have external locus of control, they relate the events affecting their lives to perceptions such as chance, fate and fortune which are out of the control. Additionally they believe that the events affecting their lives cannot be predicted and controlled⁶. The lack of self-confidence and display of unsteady performances may make them prove to aggressive behaviour⁷.

In the male sample similar findings were observed i.e there was no significant correlation between locus of control and aggression. The male respondents had 65.4% of internal and 34.6% of external locus of control. Runyon concluded that external locus of control displayed tendencies like laid back and easy going, usually humble and agreeable and internal locus of control are more task oriented, less social oriented and get better paid jobs⁸. But it is important to consider the environmental circumstances. Sometimes locus of control is seen as a stable, underlying personality construct, but this may be misleading since the theory and research indicates that locus of control is largely learned. Locus of control is a response to circumstances.⁹

In the subsample female, the result revealed a significant negative correlation between locus of control and aggression where 56% of the female respondents were having internal and 44% were having external locus of control. This could have some relation to Mamlin, Harris and Case study¹⁰ in which internal locus of control were perceived to be psychologically unhealthy and unstable. An internal oriented originally needs to be matched by competence, self-efficiency and opportunity so that the person is able to successfully experience the sense of personal control and responsibility. Internal people who lack competence, efficiency and opportunity may become neurotic (fearful), anxious (worried) and depressed (sad). This may lead to the aggressive behaviour as seen in the female sample.

Another important finding is that statistically significant difference between boys and girls were observed in their aggressive behaviour. Boys are found to be more aggressive than girls. Males are more likely to use physical aggression in struggles for power within a hierarchy or to be depend themselves against their competitors. Females, reliably show less or physical aggression than males but they display as much or more indirect aggression, that is, aggression in the form of gossip,

rumour spreading and enlisting the cooperation of a third party in undermining an acquaintance¹¹. Alvede and Obiote found that adolescents who witnessed domestic violence scored high on aggression scale boys and men are more overtly, that is physical and verbal aggressive than girls and women¹². Deming and Lochman concluded that anger and impulsivity were positively associated with aggression. Internal locus of control for success was negatively associated with aggression¹³.

Deprivation also breeds aggressive behaviour another interesting finding in this study, where statistically significant difference was observed in OBC and general category of the sample under study. OBC were found to have a higher mean on aggression (M = 92.70) than the general category (M = 87.91). OBC students because of their financial status of the family may not enjoy the privileges provided in the general category family. It is disturbing that in schools still casteism is prevailing and discrimination on the basis of caste is done which may turn a student aggressive and rebellious. Similarly rural also had a higher mean (M = 91.04) than the urban (M = 88.74) on aggression, though it was not statistically significant. The deprivation of facilities in rural areas, and also lack of opportunities of adolescent boys and girls to channelize their energy makes them more prone to aggressive and rebellions behaviour. In urban setting, schools are providing many extra-curricular activities for students. Yadava et.al. (2002) conducted a cross generation study of aggression and moral disengagement and concluded that aggression and moral disengagement was found more in rural respondents¹⁴.

3.2 Educational implications of the study

According to this study educational implications are as follows:

- Locus of control focuses on ability to cope with uncertainty. While the individuals who have less tolerance resist to the change, the ones with high tolerance can adapt to the change more easily. Therefore, locus of control tries to identify the reaction given to change according to its status. If an individual can make self-control and has the belief that he/she is the dominant of his/her fate, he/she can give positive reactions to the change.
- Locus of control is one of the vital concepts in the context of learning difficulty and attitude change. This concept covers the idea that individuals, throughout their lives, analyse the events as their attitudes or they believe that those events result from chance, fate or outside forces.
- Internal or external locus of control plays an important role for students to sustain the efficiency and usefulness of learning performance. The knowledge and experience gained by the students by means of organisational learning are a vital force in increasing student performance.

- Promoting learned optimism in students' i.e. teaching them to dispute their own negative thoughts and promoting their problem solving and social skills can prove beneficial academically.
- The social information-processing variables of approval of aggression, fantasizing about aggression, and positive outcome expectations for aggression mediate the relation between anger control and aggressive behavior.
- Children observe violence in the mass media, they learn aggressive scripts. Teachers and parents should keep a close watch on the children in all their online activities and their time spent with different mass media.
- Counselling psychologists should consider the prevalence and incidence of aggressive behaviour of adolescents while designing techniques to handle the situations.
- The school should work in collaboration with the law enforcement agents in minimizing the rate at which adolescents exhibit violent behaviour in social premises.
- This study provides the opportunity to the parents, teachers, counsellors, and school administrators to check the locus of control and aggression level of their students and treat them accordingly.

Role of a teacher

- Intervention at the beginning of the semester could be effective at decreasing a student's proclivity to external locus of control that is believe in chance and fate and not in their own efforts. Intervention strategy includes teaching better time management i.e. skills and behaviour relating to task and time awareness, planning, goal setting prioritizing, scheduling, organizing and establishing new and improved habits.
- Discussing experiences of locus of control, aggression, and negative consequences may also help to reduce academic barriers.
- Parents and teachers should use proper reinforcement and punishment practices.
- Close monitoring and specific feedback can help students learn to use new strategies with fluency, especially if students face frustration.
- Teachers should develop self-observation skills among the students. Self-observation serves at least two important functions in the process of locus of control. It provides the information needed for setting realistic goals and for evaluating one's progress towards them. Teachers should develop locus of control skills among students as according to Bandura (1997). He

believed that, as students learn, they self-direct or self-regulate which impacts their self-efficacy.

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