

## Film Based Counselling on Relational Aggression Among College Students

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### **Abstract:**

*The main aim of the study is to understand the effect of film and counselling on the level of relational aggression among college students. Random Sampling was used to screen a sample of 40 participants who are college students from Urban Bangalore and are between the ages of 18 to 23, out of which 20 were selected with High level of Aggression using Purposive Sampling. The study was a quasi- experimental method of study. The Buss and Perry Aggressive Questionnaire (1992) (Buss & Perry, 1992) was used for assessment as a pre-test post test method as statistical analysis. The statistical procedures for the quantitative analysis used was the Paired Sample t test in order to assess and obtain the pre-test and post test scores for both the Experimental and Control group. The statistical results show that there is an effect of film therapy and counselling on the level of relational aggression among college students and accepted the hypothesis. The qualitative analysis involved interpretive phenomenological analysis including content analysis, thematic analysis and behavioural analysis of participants in the Experimental Group. Implications along with suggestions are given with respect to film therapy, counselling and relational aggression.*

**Keywords:** Relational Aggression, Counselling, Film Therapy

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The literature in human aggression has become so large that truly comprehensive and general outlines are no longer practicable or easily available. Some of it is theory-driven, but much is addressed towards solving civil or communicative problems than constructing and developing general models and research paradigms and structural patterns. Aggression is used to describe a number of functionally different behaviours that have in common the affiliation of harm upon another person. "Aggression is any form of behaviour directed towards the goal of harming another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment." (Baron & Richardson, 1994) Relational Aggression is one of the types of aggression where one harms or injures another in the relationship between individuals. According to much research done, it has been found that relational aggression and victimization are related to social or psychological maladjustment in children, adolescents and college students ((Crick & Grotpeter, 1995)).

The scant literature on the harmful effects of relational aggression illustrates the need for a deeper understanding of why individuals act in this aggressive manner with their friends and romantic partners. Relational Aggression is characterized by the use of verbal acts and social exclusion to cause sociological harm. In an early study of relational aggression among college students (Werner & Crick, 1999) found out that individuals who use relational aggression tend to portray traits of antisocial and borderline personality disorders, a massive decrease in the levels of pro-social behaviour and an increase in the symptoms of bulimic symptoms and alcohol use in women.

Human aggression has however been a subject or a theme of moderately large regard and concern in the twentieth century (Tremblay, 2000). There are 2989 studies done since the ear

1967 on aggression solely pertaining to childhood (Galen, Underwood, & Papuette, 2001). A research was done on Impact of Media Violence on the Younger Generation by Dr. Sumita Rao in March 2017 focussing on at how initially media involving violence was used to entertain people, but later moved on to also influencing people to carry out such acts of aggression on the real society. More recently, there has been an increase of such media in the form of movies, videogames, television shows, etc. which not only showcase such acts, but also encourage the viewer to behave in such a manner, which is substantiated by case studies. Violence in this context is not restricted to just physical but can be expanded to mental & psychological aspects as well. She also aims to look at how far do people exercise such acts in society and up to what extent. It finally draws a conclusion by including our viewpoints of whether such media is the primary influence on a subject, or whether it acts as a supplement to the already existing hostile behaviour in viewers (Rao, 2017). However, if future generators will have a greater understanding of aggression in individuals, they will be far better prepared to execute an implement programs that not only prevent aggression but also treat and make terms with the victims of aggression (Underwood, 2003). A study was conducted by Prabhjot Malhi and Bhavneet Bharti on March, 2015 (Malhi & Bharti, 2015) in Government and Private Schools of North Indian cities. The study involved 376 adolescent participants studying in grades 9-12, inquiring the predominance of physical and relational victimization. They also examined the relationship of this prevalence with the depressive symptoms and emotional and behavioural problems that were self- initiated while reporting pertaining to the adolescents; there were three groups of students that were collated: victims of physical bullying,

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victims of relational bullying, and those who were neither victims nor committers or performers of bullying. They found out that nearly one-fourth of the students were victims of bullying. Physical bullying was reported by 8 %, relational bullying by 12 %, and 4 % reported being victims of both physical and relational bullying. Boys reported more direct victimization while girls were more likely to be victims of relational bullying.

(Yadav, 2011) According to FICCI-KPMG Indian Media and Entertainment Industry Report 2011 “Hitting the High Notes” the Indian media and entertainment industry grew from INR 587 billion in 2009 to INR 652 billion in 2010, registering an overall growth of 11 percent. In 2012 the Industry achieved the growth of 13 percent by touching the figure 738 billion. In general, these movie exercises afford clients opportunities to tell their life stories to their therapists. This is a potentially valuable means for clients to arrive at insights, organize emotional experiences, and recognize their values: by using the hypothetical movies to learn the story of the individual client, the therapist may learn much about the individual culture of that person.

A study was done by (Bierman, Kreiger, & Leifer, 2003) when they treated over 100 adolescent girls in Good Shepherd Centre in Baltimore of Maryland. The diagnoses of the girls include major depression, bipolar disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, conduct disorder and borderline personality disorder. With this mix of diagnostic categories, there are various degrees and kinds of ego deviations and deficits. The therapists reported that the girls in treatment stayed in the metaphor of the film or came out of it into the personal as far as their defences would allow. What they were defending against were sadness, depression, anxiety, terror, and vengeful feelings of anger about all of the above. The findings show that cinema therapy is a supplemental therapy but cannot and should not stand alone. Because movies offer the people who watch them over symbolic models of behaviour and attitudinal expression, to adolescent clients, capturing and processing the message from the movies is an observational learning experience (Rosenthal & Steffek, 1991). (E.Schulenberg, 2003) suggested that special care is needed to ensure the success of this technique. A three-stage guideline is introduced: assessment, implementation, and debriefing (Whu, 2008).

## II. MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study investigated the effect of film and counselling on the level of relational aggression among college students. This chapter consists of the Research Questions, Sample selection and description, an overview of the instruments used, the data collection process and the methods used in data analysis. The main aim was to study the effect of film and counselling on the level of relational aggression among college students in urban Bangalore. The (Buss & Perry, 1992) Buss and Perry Aggression Questionnaire (1992) was administered to 20 college students as Pre-Test and divide them randomly into experimental and control group with 10 participants each. The experimental group undergoes the intervention introduced by the researcher which includes film and counselling. After which the BPAQ (1992) is

administered as the post test to all the participants, the responses are scored and compared to find the affect of the intervention.

### 2.1 Participants and Setting

The sampling technique used to attain the sample for the study was ‘Random Sampling Technique’ as the researcher screened 40 participants in order to pick out 20 participants who were interpreted to have high level of aggression. However, since the plan of the conducting the research included participants with high aggression, the researcher particularly picked out the 20 participants using Purposive Sampling Technique. The population of this study composed of a random sample of college students that comprised of both under graduate and post graduate students aged 18-23. Participants were studying in Bangalore in various colleges. 20 students were selected for the Quasi Experimental method and the Pre-Test Post Test research design. The 20 participants were divided into two randomly selected groups with 10 participants each. The groups were termed as the experimental group and the control group.

### 2.2 Research Paradigm

This study is a culmination of qualitative and quantitative research. It is a quasi-experimental method of research. The design used in this research is the pre-test post test design. This design was used in order to understand and find out the effect of film and counselling on the participants with high aggression. Film and counselling was used as a training module in the counselling process that included motivational videos as well. A quasi-experimental design was used as the main aim was to understand the significance difference in the relational aggression among college students with the help of the module used on participants during the counselling process. This also aimed at having a broader approach to understand the lived experiences of the participants therefore incorporating the interpretive phenomenological analysis which included a semi-structured interview and various activities dealing with a step by step approach to overcoming the stressful situations in the counselling process

A parametric test for the statistical analysis was used in order to understand the effect or significant influence that the counselling process and motivational videos had on the level of relational aggression among the sample participants. Therefore, a pre-test post- test design was used to compare the means and attain the significant difference while incorporating the paired sample t-test as there existed the experimental group and the control group.

### 2.3 Procedures

The study consisted of voluntary participation as they were initially explained with the background of the study and the purpose of this study. After the introduction, the (Buss & Perry, 1992) Buss & Perry Aggression Questionnaire (1992) was administered to the clients on an individual basis. After the test was administered, the participants were asked to fill up the ‘Demographic Details’ form, and the Client Consent Form, as a record proof that this was solely based on the client’s voluntary participation. Once the forms were filled, the participant was asked to leave and was ensured that if

required again, they would receive a call based on the results of the questionnaire. The same procedure was executed for 20 more college students who voluntarily wished to participate in the study. The researcher divided the 20 participants into two groups namely, Control Group and the Experimental Group. The participants of the Experimental Group underwent the intervention or training module created by the researcher which involved counselling and films or motivational videos.

After the counselling process of all the six participants of the Experimental Group, the participants of both the Experimental Group and the Control Group (20 subjects) are administered with the Buss & Perry Aggression Questionnaire again in the form of the Post Test in order to analyze the effect of counselling and film on the change in relational aggression among the participants by executing the T-Test.

**2.4 Data Collection and Analysis**

The Quasi-Experimental Research Design consists of the culmination of the two methods namely, Qualitative and Quantitative method.

2.4.1 *Quantitative Method:* involves the process of administering the Buss & Perry Aggression Questionnaire (1992) to college students. Analyzing the Buss & Perry Aggression Questionnaire (1992) with 29 questions involves the following scoring:

- 1 for “Extremely Uncharacteristic of Me”
- 2 for “Uncharacteristic of Me”
- 3 for “Neither Characteristic nor Uncharacteristic of Me”
- 4 for “Characteristic of Me”
- 5 for “Extremely Characteristic of Me”

The questions 9 and 16 are reverse scored and the total score for Aggression is the sum of the factor scores. After the Pre-Test and Post Test administration of the test to the participants, the T-test is obtained.

2.4.2 *Qualitative Stages of Analysis for Interpretive Phenomenological Approach:* According to (Smith & Osborn, 2003), there are four stages that are used to analyze qualitative content in an interpretive phenomenological approach are as follows:

- The first stage involves a detailed reading and holistic perspective of the future interpretations. This involves several close, detailed readings of the data were made, to obtain a holistic perspective so that future interpretations stay grounded within the participant’s account.
- The second stage involves initial themes were identified and organized into clusters and checked against the data.
- Themes were then refined and condensed, and examined for connections between them.
- A narrative account of the interplay between the interpretative activity of the researcher and the participant’s account of their experience in their own words.

*Behavioural Interpretation:* The behaviour is analyzed based on the qualitative interpretation that is prepared on the basis on Sattler’s behaviour and Attitude Checklist. It is noted that not all items are relevant to all kinds of tests. The researcher used it more as a guide to direct the behavioural observation and qualitative interpretation. The remarks and comments by the researcher for each subject are provided during the pre-test and post test of the study. Since there are 10 participants in the experimental group, the same has been done for the participants mentioned.

*Content Analysis:* During the counselling sessions while administering the training module prepared by the researcher, the content provided by them in the sessions was analyzed. The pre-test content included the client drawing or expressing their emotions and feelings of anger on a blank sheet of paper. This however, was during the initial stages of the training module. The content of the post test was provided by the opinions and responses of the client in the “Video Based Learning Experience Worksheet” provided by the researcher.

The content analysis is based on thematic analysis, materials from open questionnaires and Observational studies which are not fully standardized.

**III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The hypothesis for the study states that “Film therapy and counselling reduces the level of Relational Aggression among College Students”. The quasi-experimental research design was implemented on the 20 participants of the research which consisted of college students from urban Bangalore.

However, according to the analyzed data as found to be mentioned in Table 1 and 2, it can be seen that there is a significant decrease in the level of Relational Aggression among the Experimental Group participants and there is negligible change in the level of relational aggression among the Control Group participants.

**Table 4.1.1:** Showing the Mean, Standard Deviation, t value, and the Degrees of Freedom of Relational Aggression that was conducted as Pre-Test and Post Test on the Experimental Group among college students.

**Paired Samples Statistics**

	Mean	N	S.D.	df	t <sub>1</sub>
Group 1 BPAQ Pre	99.000	10	15.8395	9	5.638
BOAQ Post	77.200	10	9.5429		

Source: Primary Data

**Table 4.1.2:** Showing the Mean, Standard Deviation, t value and the Degrees of Freedom of Relational Aggression that was conducted as Pre-Test and Post Test on the Control Group among college students.

**Paired Samples Statistics**

	Mean	N	S.D.	df	t <sub>1</sub>
Group 1 BPAQ Pre	99.000	10	15.8395	9	5.638
BOAQ Post	77.200	10	9.5429		

Source: Primary Data

Since the value of  $t_1$  is greater than  $t_2$ , it is significant at 95% confidence level and hence the module is found to be effective on the participants. This means that there is an effect of film and counselling on the level of relational aggression among college students. The tables also show that film and counselling reduces the level of Relational Aggression among the participants in the study. This proves the hypothesis which states that "There is significant difference in the level of relational aggression due to film and counselling among college students"

Since this study was a quasi-experimental study, the qualitative analysis included interpretive phenomenological analysis. This involved content analysis and thematic analysis. The researcher also included behavioural analysis. The ten participants that were in the Experimental Group underwent the counselling process and were shown motivational videos that focussed on impacting the participant positively. However, the main themes seen in the participants involved Adjustment Issues being the main theme as it was mostly the causal factor of other factors, bringing out other themes that influenced the participants' lives. Since the main focus of attention was on the aspect of mental bullying and relational aggression among the participants, the researcher explored the aspects of relational aggression, i.e. the participants being perpetrators of the aggressive behaviour or victims of the same. Some were also passively aggressive while others were actively aggressive.

However, other themes that came into focus were Relationship Issues that were related to the most common theme i.e. Adjustment Issues. Another major theme that was focussed on was Academic Stress among participants which was interrelated to the issue of Adjustment with respect to college, city or environment as a whole. Although the above three mentioned themes were in focus, there was parental pressure as well which sometimes triggered the participants to exhibit aggressive behaviour. The above-mentioned factors seemed to have led to Frustration and hence this in turn led to Aggression or being Mentally Bullied.

All the participants initiated a realization of the damage caused to both themselves and others around them. Counselling process helped them to understand the situations better and most of them became more empathetic and rational in their thinking. Even though they felt that their situations were unfair to them, the counselling process and motivational videos helped them to reframe their situations and look for possible positive outcomes in order to start afresh optimistically.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The study was conducted to determine the effect of film and counselling on the level of relational aggression among college students. The study used a quasi-experimental method analysis which was a culmination of both quantitative and qualitative methods along with random sampling method. The researcher screened 40 students and potential participants before the researcher selected 20 students who obtained high level of aggression which satisfied the need of the study. The obtained results from the Buss and Perry Aggression Questionnaire were statistically

analysed with the help of Paired Sample t test as the above-mentioned scale was used as a pre-test and post-test. The method used, also involved the Experimental and Control Group among that consisted of 10 participants each, in which the Experimental Group underwent the counselling process and the screening of motivational videos as part of film therapy that constituted the module based on the ABCDE Analysis by Albert Ellis. The qualitative analysis included content analysis, behavioural analysis and thematic analysis involved in the interpretive phenomenological analysis techniques. The statistical result of the study revealed that there is an effect of film and counselling on the level of relational aggression among college students and accepted the hypothesis which starts that "Film therapy and counselling reduces the level of Relational Aggression among College Students". The results of the interpretive phenomenological analysis revealed that common themes involved in aggressive behaviour among the college students including Adjustment Issues, Interpersonal Relationship Issues, Academic Stress and Parental Pressure that were intertwined and constituted the main factors of Frustration and Aggression.

#### V. LIMITATIONS

- i. Discontinuation of the counselling process by some of the participants. At times there were issues that made some participants suspicious and felt uncomfortable about opening up about their issues, so they decided to discontinue the counselling process, this acted as a limitation in the process of the research.
- ii. Since data collection was done during the time of the internship, at times the mentor would accompany the researcher during her counselling process. Due to this, the participant was unable to talk freely regarding their situations or emotions.
- iii. Limited Period of Time: Due to the limited period of time, it was difficult for the participant and the researcher to provide more time to the counselling process and deal with more aspects of the problems that were being faced by the client.
- iv. Since film therapy is a relatively new topic, there hasn't been much research done on the same in the past, therefore, using it as part of the researcher's intervention technique was a challenge in itself.

#### VI. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since film therapy is not a more popularized topic of research, there is a lot of scope in the topic of film therapy. Film therapy can be used in almost every field of psychology and therefore, further research done on the same would be just a suggestion. Relational Aggression on college students has been vastly researched upon in the past, but the same topic has more scope on different age groups and different sections of the society involving gender differences. Using Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy and implying its effects in counselling for Aggressive individuals is something that hasn't been researched well upon in the past. Therefore, further research on the same has a vast scope.

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