

# Aggression in Iran 5 to 11 Grade Children in Relation to Parental Involvement and Attachment- Security

Nayereh Shahmohammadi

Departement of Research and Educational Planning,  
Ministry of Education, Tehran, Iran

Doi:10.5901/jesr.2012.v2n10p89

## Abstract

Aggression is a response that delivers noxious stimuli to another organism, in the form of a subtle stimulus such as an insult or verbal harangue. Aggression is often accompanied by strong negative emotional states. The emotion that we can call anger is usually aroused by some provocation. Aggression is the result of two variables. One is state of the person in which the person is capable of aggression, is ready to aggress and has aggressive responses available. The other is a situation that elicit the actual aggressive behavior. In the present investigation an effort has been made to probe into some of the factors related to aggression in 5 to 11 grade school children of Palestine. The variables chosen were personal parental involvement (social, academic, and total) and attachment security (dependency, availability, and total).

**Keywords:** Aggression, Behaviour, Parental Involvement, Attachment Security, Interaction, Parent-child relationship, Gender

## Introduction

Few people would deny that "aggression" is very common in contemporary society. For some, such as those living in South Africa, Northern Ireland, Central America, and Middle East, aggression and violence are experienced daily and in intensely personal ways. For others the phenomenon is known, for the most part, in only indirect ways, such as through the mass media. However, even those fortunate enough to have been spared the direct experience of lethal violence may occasionally encounter something perceived to be aggression in a less intense form, such as verbal insult, rough physical contact, or hostile rejection. Aggression whether harmful to life or limb or merely painful to ego, seem to be a real and important part of human condition.

Seeking a definition of aggression raise some problems. One might think that people would be in substantial agreement of defining something so important and pervasive, but such is not the case. The term "Aggression" is applied to wide array of behaviors that often appears from each other. Perhaps most people, including psychologist, would agree in general with definition of aggression given by Buss 1961, i.e., aggression is "a response that delivers noxious stimuli to another organism". Certainly what we ordinary call aggression does involve noxious stimulation of one person to another, in the form of a bullet in the body, a shattering bomb blast, a physical blow or a more subtle stimulus such as insult or verbal harangue.

One construct that most people would probably consider necessary in aggression is intent to harm another person. The notion of intentionally is explicit in the definition of aggression given by one influential group of psychologists: "Aggression is an act whose goal response is injury to an organism"[9]

Aggression is often accompanied by strong negative emotional states. The emotion that we call "anger" is usually aroused by some provocation. Anger is most often thought of as an

intervening condition, which instigates, and then guides, aggressive behavior. This type of aggression is therefore called affective or angry aggression and its main is injury or harm to provocateur [13]. It is accompanied by distinctive patterns of activity in the central and autonomic nervous systems, including activation of the hypothalamus, increased blood flow to the musculature, heightened blood pressure and pulse, rate, papillary dilation and decreased flow of blood to the viscera.

Behavior need not have a strong emotional basis to be aggressive, however, nor does it have to be associated with aggressive cognition or affective states. People often attack others with intent to harm without necessarily feeling any malice toward the victim. The primary goal of such aggression is not injury or harm to the victim; the aggression is simply a means to some other desired end. One such end is self-defense. Most courts of law recognize self-protection as a valid defense for act of violence. Aggression that occurs in military contexts is also often instrumental to some larger end such winning a war or defending territory. Another use of aggression that is instrumental is the attempts of establish social and coercive power over others[37]through aggressive means. Finally, Milgran (1963) showed that people were capable of committing gross acts of violence against another human being simple in obedience to commands from person with authority.

Aggression is the result of two variables. One is state of the person in which the person is capable of aggression, is ready to aggress, and has aggressive responses available. The proposed state of the person can be thought of as a background condition that makes aggression possible, given the right situation. This state may be the result, for example, of past learning, or of a biologically inherited aggressive temperament, or of temporary reactions to certain stimuli that elicit readiness to aggress. Anything that creates in the person potential for aggression is to be counted among these so-called "background" or "setting" variables. The situations that elicit aggression from a person who is in a state of readiness include a wide range of aversive condition or provocations that cause the person to feel stressed and aroused. When one of these situations occurs for a person who is potentially aggressive, aggression is elicited.

Psychologists who take a social-psychological approach to behavior usually tend to treat aggression as a set of acquired behaviors and to attach less emphasis to innate and biological determinants. Advocates of this approach apply to aggression the principles of social learning theory[2], in which aggressive behavior is usually dealt with in terms of (1) features of the environment which foster the initial learning or acquisition of the behavior:(2) environmental that facilitate the performance of aggressive acts, once learned ; and (3) conditions that maintain aggressive behavior.

Reinforced aggression tends to generalize in accordance with the principles of response generalization. Increasing, the likelihood of one aggressive response through reinforcement increases also the probability of occurrence of other aggression. Loew (1967) has shown that subjects who are given the experimenter's approval for making hostile verbal statement are more likely than non-reinforced subjects to attack another person where subsequently more likely to emit hostile verbalizations than were non-reinforced subjects. Given rewards to a person for aggression may therefore have the ultimate effect of making that person more violent in general.

## **1. Attachment Security**

During the past two decades, researchers have clarified the role of attachment security in promoting psychological well-being during infancy and adulthood. Most recently, attention has turned toward understanding the role of attachment with parents in healthy adjustment during

adolescence. Adolescence introduces a period of significant transition in family and social role expectations, coupled with increases in the range and intimacy of social relationships. During early adolescence (ages 13-14), the emergence of autonomy is an important developmental task [1]. Adolescence involves a transition from a dependency relationship with parents to mutually reciprocal relationships with others (e.g. parents, peers and intimate partners). Recent models, based on attachment theory, emphasize the importance of attachment or connection to, rather than detachment from, parental figures for the development of autonomy and adjustment during the adolescent years, despite decreases in shared activities and interactions[25],[26].

The consolidation of identity and clarification of values at this age assist adolescents in regulating their behavior independently of others around them. However, this process can pose risks for adolescents and their relationships with those to whom they are close. In their attempts to differentiate their own beliefs and values from others, many adolescents experiment with risky behaviors in the areas of delinquency, substance use and abuse, and sex. For some, such risky involvement is limited; for others, however, it becomes problematic. Moreover, the stressful process of differentiation and identity consolidation can result in significant psychological distress. Compared to adults, adolescents show higher stress levels and fewer coping resources [1],[16]. In addition, depressive symptoms increase substantially from middle to late adolescence, particularly for girls[30][7].

It is important to understand that the quality of parent-child relationships within adolescence is linked to the quality of these relationships prior to adolescence, and adjustment during adolescence is related to childhood adjustment. Similarly, although adolescence marks a period during which the crystallization of identity is the central developmental challenge, identity development extends from birth across the life span[17]. Nonetheless, the period of adolescence presents unique developmental challenges for adjustment and new opportunities for identity development and growth in parent-child relationships.

## **2. Attachment Theory**

Attachment theory was proposed by John Bowlby(1980) to account for infant social and emotional development and adjustment. He conceptualized attachment as a life-span construct, with children maintaining attachment bonds to their parents across childhood and into adulthood. A basic premise of the theory is that the quality of attachment relationships stems from interactions between infants and their caregivers, reflecting the degree to which infants can rely on their caregivers to provide proximity and companionship, a safe haven in the face of threat or anxiety, and a secure base from which to explore. The unique pattern of caregiver sensitivity and responsiveness to the infant's needs results in a particular attachment organization in the child[3],[1].

Attachment patterns have been delineated in childhood, adolescent and adult attachment: secure, avoidant (dismissing), ambivalent (preoccupied) and, most recently, disorganized (unresolved). Secure attachment is characterized by a developmentally appropriate balance between exploration from and proximity seeking with the caregiver in times of perceived danger or threat. In contrast, insecure attachment is manifested in several different ways. The preoccupied child curtails exploration of the environment and new social relationships and shows heightened vigilance and fear of abandonment by his or her caregiver. Avoidant attachment in adolescence and adulthood may be either dismissing or fearful. Dismissing attachment is characterized by the tendency to be disengaged from attachment figures and to devalue the importance of attachment and associated feelings. In contrast, fearful attachment is characterized by the tendency to avoid

attachment figures due to fear of rejection and, at the same time, the desire to pursue relationships and express attachment behaviour[7],[10]. As reviewed below, the security of attachment has been found to have profound implications for adjustment in both childhood and adolescence.

### **3. Attachment and Adjustment in Childhood**

Extensive research suggests that attachment has important implications for adjustment in childhood. For example, in normative samples, children who are securely attached to their mothers engage in more prosocial behavior and are perceived as more socially competent than insecure children[[11]. They demonstrate higher positive affect and lower negative affect in social interactions than insecure children. Securely attached children are also rated by their teachers as more empathic and more compliant[16].

On the other hand, several sources of research show a link between insecure attachment patterns (avoidant, ambivalent, disorganized) in infancy and non-compliance and aggression in early childhood. Consistent with the theory that insecure attachment is related to poor emotional regulation; longitudinal studies have demonstrated that avoidant attachment in infancy predicts negativity, non-compliance and hyperactivity at 3.5 years of age, and higher ratings of problem behavior in Grades 1 to 3. Compared to secure children, avoidant children are more aggressive and confrontational with their mothers[34], and more aggressive, hostile and distant with their peers[11][20]. Similarly, disorganized attachment in infancy has been shown to predict later aggressive behavior. Several researchers have shown, for example, that children with disorganized attachment patterns in infancy develop controlling and coercive behavior as they move into the preschool and early childhood period[15],[25]. Ambivalently attached children, on the other hand, are more adult-oriented and emotionally dependent than securely attached children. With peers, ambivalently attached children have been found to be lower in peer status, more withdrawn and more apt to be victimized.

Insecure attachment patterns are not, however, consistently related to later behavior problems. A number of researchers[10],[19] do not report that avoidant or disorganized attachment predicts later aggressive behavior. A review of this literature shows that the association between insecurity of attachment and amount of later problem behavior is found more consistently among children in high-risk contexts (e.g. family poverty, low social support, parental psychopathology) than among children in low-risk contexts. For example, Lyons-Ruth et al. (1991) found that infant security was most predictive of later aggressive problems in families where mothers suffered from psychopathology, particularly chronic depression, and where mothers engaged in hostile, intrusive parenting practices toward the infant. These authors reported that 56% of low-income children who were classified as disorganized in infancy and whose mothers suffered from psychopathology at that time displayed aggressive behavior in kindergarten. In contrast, only 25% of low-income children with one risk factor and 5% of low-income children with no risk factor (i.e. neither maternal psychopathology nor maternal use of hostile, intrusive parenting) showed aggressive behavior in kindergarten.

In summary, there is consensus that insecure attachment is a risk factor for later problems in life, but is neither necessary nor sufficient in it. Maladaptive parenting factors appear to increase the risk that insecure attachment will be associated with poor adjustment. However, it must be kept in mind that these generalizations are based on small samples.

#### 4. Development of Attachment in Adolescence

There are two issues to consider with respect to attachment in adolescence: 1) the nature of changes in the child-parent relationship and 2) the adolescent's development of new close relationships (e.g. with peers). Complex changes in the child-parent relationship occur during adolescence. Although some studies have shown that self-reported attachment security to both parents decreases with pubertal maturity [31], recent investigations indicate that only certain components of the attachment relationship change while others remain stable. For example, the degree to which children seek proximity and rely on the principal attachment figure in times of stress decreases, but that attachment figure's perceived availability does not [10],[27]. These findings indicate that the maintenance of physical proximity to parents and need for protection in times of threat or stress may be less essential for older children due to increased mental and physical capacities (e.g. more sophisticated coping mechanisms). However, the availability of the attachment figure (i.e. the belief that the attachment figure is open to communication and responsive if help is needed) remains important to young people [21],[22].

#### 5. Attachment and Adjustment in Adolescence

In the past decade, studies have begun to examine the contribution of adolescent-parent attachment to psychological adjustment. The majority of these studies have examined this relationship within late adolescent (junior college, first-year University) samples. Few studies have examined adolescent-parent attachment and adjustment in early (age 12-13) and middle adolescents (at around age 15 years).

With reference to the relation between attachment patterns in adolescence and adjustment, reports to date mostly confirm findings based on studies of young children. That is, secure attachment is typically related to healthier adjustment, whereas insecure attachment is linked to various forms of maladjustment.

In normal population studies, late adolescents who are classified as securely attached are rated by their peers as less anxious, less hostile and more able to successfully regulate their feelings (i.e. more ego-resilient) compared to insecurely attached adolescents [3][4][9]. Adolescents who report a positive relationship with their parents, and who feel comfortable turning to them for support, have been found to have a greater sense of mastery of their worlds [32],[18],[19] and to experience less loneliness [20],[21][22],[23][36]. More positive attachment to parents among 15 year-olds is also associated with fewer mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, inattention and conduct problems [30][34].

A positive relationship with parents may also protect adolescents from risk. Adolescents who report close, accepting relationships with their mothers report less involvement in delinquent activities. These positive relationship qualities are those typical of secure attachment. Indeed, adolescents' secure attachment to their mother has been linked to less experimentation with drugs [40] and less frequent substance use [7].

In terms of specific insecure attachment styles, a dismissing style (i.e. poor communication and trust, combined with feelings of alienation and disengagement from the attachment relationship) has been associated with externalizing problem behaviors (e.g. aggression and delinquency [30], more experimentation with drugs [40] and riskier attitudes about safe sex [40]. Dismissing young adults report less family support and more loneliness than their peers.

Like dismissing adolescents, fearful adolescents are avoidant, but they are distressed by their lack of closeness to others, and suffer from feelings of inadequacy and anxiety [4]. Fearful

attachment with mothers has been linked to delinquency and greater experimentation with drugs[40].

Adolescents who have a preoccupied attachment style (i.e. have positive views of others, and negative views of themselves) see themselves as socially incompetent and are rated by their peers as more anxious than all other attachment groups. Compared to other adolescents, these teens report more physical symptoms[14]. In a three-category system of attachment classification (secure, dismissing, preoccupied), preoccupied adolescents have been found to be the most vulnerable to maladjustment[7].

Research on high-risk populations confirms findings based on normative samples: high-risk adolescents with insecure attachment patterns are more likely than securely attached adolescents to experience a range of mental health problems[1]. These include suicidality, drug use[27], aggressive and antisocial behaviour[16],[23],[40]. For example, in a sample of male adolescent inpatients, Rosenstein and Horowitz (1996) found that symptoms of conduct disorder were associated with a dismissing attachment pattern. Preoccupied adolescents, on the other hand, have been found more likely to report anxiety, dysthymia and an interest in others combined with a fear of criticism and/or rebuff[34],[1]. Preoccupation has also been found to be associated with adolescent externalizing behaviours, though only in the presence of the additional demographic risk factors of male gender and low income[1].

Although similar patterns of results are present in normative and clinical samples[1], research with younger children [30] also shows that the relation between attachment and adjustment is stronger among children in high-risk (e.g. poverty, low social support, parental psychopathology) than low-risk contexts. In other words, the relationship between attachment and adjustment appears to be moderated by exposure to adversity. This suggests that insecure attachment alone does not differentiate well-adjusted from poorly adjusted adolescents. Extrapolating from existing research with young children suggests that adolescents who grow up in conditions of adversity and inadequate access to resources may not suffer from psychopathology if they share secure attachment relationships with their parents. Conversely, adolescents who develop in a supportive and resource-rich environment, albeit with less secure attachment, may have poor outcomes, at least in some domains. Research examining the moderating effects of adversity on the relationship between attachment and adjustment in adolescents is urgently required.

## **6. Parenting, Attachment Security and Adjustment in Adolescence**

In infancy, caregivers who are sensitive and consistently responsive to their child's needs have been found to foster secure attachments. These children develop perceptions (i.e. internal working models) of themselves as lovable and of others as helpful and available. Conversely, caregivers who are insensitive and rejecting have been found to have avoidant children who view themselves as unworthy, and others as uncaring and undependable. Research has linked avoidant attachment to mothers' suppressed anger, lack of tenderness in touching and holding, and rejection of child-initiated attachment behavior. Such children tend to suppress their feelings and avoid contact in times of stress to avoid further alienating their caregivers. Caregivers who are inconsistent (i.e. sometimes responsive and sometimes rejecting) tend to have children who are preoccupied with discovering ways of eliciting care and are hyper vigilant to sources of distress. Such children experience conflict between the desire to approach the caregiver for support and feelings of anger and anxiety at the caregiver's unreliability[3]. They come to view themselves as incapable and unworthy of obtaining support.

In adolescence, parental involvement, encouragement of psychological autonomy, and demands for age-appropriate behavior combined with limit setting and monitoring (i.e. authoritative parenting) contribute to good psychosocial, academic and behavioral adjustment among adolescents[4],[36]. Similar to the way in which parental sensitivity and responsiveness contribute to secure attachment in infancy, recent findings indicate that parental warmth/involvement, psychological autonomy granting and behavioral control/monitoring are associated with security of attachment in late childhood and early adolescence[17]. Low warmth and low control were particularly associated with dismissing/avoidant attachment, and low psychological autonomy granting with preoccupied attachment. Thus, in adolescence, it appears that parental behavior that fosters autonomy in the context of parental availability, in addition to parental warmth/responsiveness, becomes important for secure attachment.

With respect to adolescent adjustment, parental warmth/involvement and behavioral control are associated with greater social competence, autonomy, positive attitudes toward school and work, academic achievement and self-esteem, as well as with less depression, school misconduct, delinquency and drug use[36],[1],[27]. With respect to protection against depressed mood, adolescents' security with their mother seems to be particularly important. In terms of resistance to substance abuse, the effect of parenting appears to operate through adolescents' development of better self-regulation skills (i.e. self-control, behavioral competence, adaptive coping), and less affiliation with deviant peers[30]. The negative associations between observations of maternal warmth, and teacher and official reports of delinquency, are robust, persisting even after controlling for child IQ, age, attachment to delinquent peers, ethnicity, poverty, family size, parental deviance, supervision and discipline [35]. On the other hand, hostile punishment and coercive interactions between parents and children combined with poor parental monitoring contribute to conduct problems in preadolescence and antisocial behaviour in adolescence [32],[33].

Although it is likely that the link between adolescent attachment quality and parent behaviour is bi-directional, there is some evidence to suggest that parental rejection is a stronger predictor of delinquency than the reverse[35], supporting the crucial importance of parenting behaviour for adolescent outcome. Of particular importance is the recent finding that in high-risk contexts (e.g. neighbourhood poverty, crime, unemployment), parental monitoring may be effective in reducing adolescent deviance only for securely attached adolescents[1].

## **7. Attachment, Parental Socialization and Gender**

To understand the relationship between adolescent-parent attachment and adjustment, it is important to examine two potentially significant moderating effects: gender of child and gender of parent. First, there is some evidence that sex differences emerge in attachment patterns by adolescence and early adulthood. The factors that contribute to these differences are important to investigate. Second, there is evidence that attachment relationships with mothers and fathers may differ in their importance for predicting adjustment.

Sex differences in attachment quality in infancy and early childhood are neither implied theoretically nor typically found. However, by late adolescence and adulthood, sex differences in patterns of insecure attachment are sometimes found, with more men being dismissing and more women being preoccupied[26][24]. Gender-specific parental socialization practices may contribute to these gender differences in attachment style. For example, parents monitor the behavior of their daughters more than their sons[9].

With respect to differences in attachment relationships with mothers and fathers, it is important to understand that most studies of child attachment and adjustment have focused on

mother-child rather than father-child relationships. This focus has occurred because the primary caregiver in infancy is typically the mother, because infant attachment is predictable primarily from mothers' as opposed to fathers' attachment style, and because childhood attachment security is predicted more from infant attachment to mother than from infant attachment to father[23],[25]. In late adolescence, mothers remain the principal attachment figure. Although both boys and girls see their mother's availability as remaining constant across age, adolescent girls perceive their fathers as less available than younger girls[26]. Consistent with these findings, several studies have demonstrated that there are significant changes in the quality of girls' relationship with their fathers during adolescence[33]. For example, with the transition to adolescence, girls report feeling more distant, uncomfortable and withdrawn from their fathers, and feel that their fathers do not meet their emotional needs[25],[26].

Despite the greater importance of mothers as attachment figures, and of attachment to mothers for adjustment, some research indicates that attachment to fathers may be significantly associated with certain aspects of adjustment. For example, independent of and in addition to security of attachment to mothers, security of attachment to fathers has been found to be associated with peer competence[21],[22],[23],[35]. Moreover, fathers' warmth and involvement have been found to play a unique role in intellectual development and academic achievement, and to be associated with higher self-esteem in middle childhood[16]. Moreover, it is possible that stronger relations between child-father attachment and adjustment might emerge in adolescence. In support of this hypothesis, a longitudinal study of north German children found that coping styles at age 16 were related to several measures of quality of early childhood attachment to fathers but not to mothers[8]. Moreover, adolescents' ratings of their father's negative affect but not their mother's was associated with the adolescents' ratings of the quality of their relationship with their parent. It is important for research to clarify the changing nature of girls' compared to boys' relationship to their fathers during adolescence, the relation of these differences to differential parental socialization, and the implications for adjustment.

## **8. Need of the Study**

Bearing in mind all theoretical background, it is obvious that Families not only directly shape the development of aggression through their control tactics but also indirectly contribute in their children's aggressive behavior. Parental monitoring or their children's where about activities and social contacts is an important determinant of children's aggression. Some parents have high involvement in their children and are aware of their activities, problems and success where as other parents may not bother as much about their children's experience. Lack of parental monitoring has been found to be associated with delinquency attack against properly and proper relations with peers and teachers [32],[33][36].

The outcome of poor parental disciplinary practices and lack of monitoring result not only in child who is aggressive and antisocial but also a child who is socially unskilled. However the number of studies reporting the effects of parental involvement on aggression are rather scanty.

Another variable of interest in the present study is attachment security. The quality of attachment in early childhood has implications for child's later personality. Early social interactions with attachment figures do shape the child later attitudes and behavior, including their sense of self as well as cognitive and social development. It would affect his peer relationships in many respects. As few researchers have reported that security attached children are less aggressive and more popular.[15]



This area has however not been much researched, besides most of the children with mothers. Same is about parental involvement. The role of the father has rather than been ignored. Many of later researchers, however, have indicated the importance of fathers' role in child rearing. The role of the men in the family and society has undergone drastic change in the pas two decade. As a result of social change, men are assuming as more active role in the family rather being solely the bread winner. It would be equally important to study fathers' involvement as that of mother of the child involvement; very few attempts have been made to study the role of parental involvement and attachment security in relation to regression. This area has largely been unexplored though there are many studies conducted to investigate the relation of aggressive with other parental variable like child rearing attitudes, disciplinary practices, etc. Therefore, it would be worthwhile endeavor to conduct a study to investigate the relationship of children's aggression with parental involvement and attachment security.

### 9. Aims of Present Study

- a. to investigate the relationship of aggression with :
  - personal parental involvement (social, academic and total)
  - attachment security (dependency ,availability ,and total)
- b. to study gender differences in aggression
- c. to find out the significant predictors of aggression in terms of differences in:
  - parental involvement
  - attachment security

### 10. Hypotheses

- a. Maternal personal involvement (social, academic & total) will be negatively correlated with aggression in children.
- b. Parental personal involvement (social, academic & total) will be negatively correlated with aggression in children.
- c. Attachment security of children (dependency, availability and total) for mother will be negatively correlated with aggression in children.
- d. Attachment security of children (dependency, availability and total) for father will be negatively correlated with aggression in children.
- e. Aggression would be higher in boys as compared to girls.
- f. Girls will perceive higher parental involvement than boys.

### 11. Sample

The sample of the present study consisted of 600 school children (5 to 11 grade) out of these 300 were boys and the rest were girls. The sample was randomly selected from various schools. Study subjects were from two-parent families and living with parents.

### 12. Tools

For this research three types of questionnaires were used which as follows:

1. Eron et al's (1961) Aggression Index[12] : this is a guess who techniques in which every child in a class rates everybody else on a selected series of 10 aggression items. The

subjects are asked to write the names of their classmates who act in the way described by particular question. The subject can give as many as name as he thinks acts in that manner. Parental Involvement Scale (personal)[39] : this scale was used to measure the amount of personal involvement of parents in their children life. It consists of 30 items pertaining to the mother, 30 to the father.

2. Kern Attachment Security Scale (KSS)[20] : children attachment security has been assessed separated for each parent using the Kerns Security Scale (KSS). A 15 items, forced choice, self report measure with higher scores indicating more secure attachment. This scale has two subscales. The first 9 items include dependency and the other items include availability of parents.

### 13. Analysis Methods

In order to assess relationship between aggression in children, parental personal involvement and attachment security, also relationship between aggression and subscales of parental involvement attachment security, Correlation analysis was used.

Also for assessing the differences between genders in aggression, attachment security T – test was manipulated. Moreover regression analysis was conducted to assess prediction of aggression by subscales of parental involvement and attachment security.

### 14. Findings

1. Older children perceived their parents as significantly less warm (e.g. listening less to their opinions and ideas, speaking less of good things the child does) and more rejecting (e.g. nagging more about little things, enforcing rules depending more on their mood) than younger children. Although confiding in mother did not change with age, older children were less likely to discuss problems with their fathers than younger children.
2. Older children perceive their parents as less warm and more rejecting, and report less ease in confiding in them, at least in fathers. Children perceive parents' availability for help as remaining constant across age but that actual parental involvement decreases with age. This latter decrease may be due to greater child autonomy and less need by the child for parents' involvement with age. Confiding in mother and father were particularly limited, however. Specifically, children were free to select either or both their mother or father
3. Girls and boys were equally positive in describing the quality of their relationships with parents and in confiding in their mothers, although girls reported less confiding in their fathers than boys
4. No gender difference was found in regard to parental support to their children aggression (e.g. helping with school problems if needed, talking to teachers if needed). Girls reported less conduct problems/aggressive behavior and fewer property offences than boys. Girls tended to have lower self-esteem and more internalizing problems than boys. In addition, girls behaved more pro-socially and were less victimized than boys. Nonetheless, the impact of parenting practices on girls and boys is similar. Parenting is also associated with adjustment in younger and older children in similar ways. That is, for both girls and boys of all ages, angry, arbitrary parenting (i.e. low use of reasoning) is associated with a poorer parent-child relationship (i.e. child perceptions of parents as less warm and more rejecting).

5. Younger children perceived their relationship with their parents as more positive, and they reported more ease in confiding in both mothers and fathers. As previously noted, positive parent-child relationship quality in turn was associated with a wide range of positive outcomes in child adjustment and feeling of security.
6. Parents report similar practices in parenting sons and daughters. Nonetheless, girls perceive their parents as less rejecting and warmer than boys. Boys and girls are equally at ease confiding in their mothers, but girls confide less in their fathers than boys
7. Secure attachment during adolescence is related to less aggressive behavior. Securely attached adolescents are less likely to engage in substance abuse, antisocial and aggressive behavior [7],[40]. Securely attached adolescents enjoy more positive relationships with family and peers [31],[19]. They demonstrate less concern about loneliness and social rejection than do insecurely attached adolescents and they display more adaptive coping strategies[17][14][28].
8. Parent-child relationships undergo important transitions during adolescence, including a decrease in time spent with parents and a shift from dependency to mutual reciprocity[24],[25]. Parents play a significant role in supporting secure attachment during these transitions[26]. Adolescents benefit from parental support that encourages autonomy development yet ensures continued monitoring and emotional connectedness. Specific parenting skills that promote attachment security and autonomy development include psychological availability, warmth, active listening, behavior monitoring, limit setting, acceptance of individuality, and negotiation of rules and responsibilities[1],[17],[18]. Parental support during stressful periods of transition (e.g., entry to high school) predicts positive adolescent adjustment[31].

## 15. Implications and Suggestions

1. In order to make children less aggressive parents should show higher involvement in children, more they will interact with them, more children will learn personal behaviour. When parents shows interest in the child activities, the chances that she will share his problem with parents is higher. This would lead to lesser frustration and conflict, in children leading to lower aggression.
2. It is important that parents show such behaviour towards children that they (children) are able to develop a secure attachment with them. The children need to be assured that the parents get pleasure in meeting with children.(dependency) needs.
3. Parents should make themselves available to children so that the latter can have the confidence that the former will be available to them when even need to be. This feeling of security is very essential; otherwise child may be at loss to understand various problematic situations and may react aggressively.
4. Parents need to recognize the continued importance of their relationship with their children. Although the parent-child relationship undergoes transformation during adolescence, the adjustment of adolescents depends in good measure on the quality of their relationship with their parents.
5. Children are more vulnerable to adjustment problems in adolescence than in childhood. Parents need to anticipate that their children require increased support during periods of transition, such as entry into high school.
6. Children need to feel that their parents are engaged and supportive of them.. Nonetheless, they require ongoing parental support in terms of parents remaining open to

communication and responsive if help is needed Specific parenting skills include warmth, acceptance of individuality, active listening, behaviour monitoring, limit setting and negotiation.

7. Parents need to recognize the special role of fathers in supporting the well-being of their children. Fathers' increased psychological support of daughters may be particularly beneficial to them. Parents need to recognize the continued importance of their relationship with their children.
8. Children are more vulnerable to adjustment problems in adolescence than in childhood. Parents need to anticipate that their children requires increased support specially at upper classes and upper ages
9. Obviously, children adjustment is also determined by factors outside the family and the parent-child relationship. Even though parents may only indirectly affect how peers and other social influences determine the adjustment of their children, parents' support through the stressful challenges remains important.
10. Parents need to support their children in their exploration of social norms by listening to concerns about social approval and peer pressure, discussing values and reasons for limit setting, and negotiating rules when appropriate. Parents need to monitor involvement in potentially dangerous situations and work with their children to ensure safety. Parents need to be careful not to dismiss problems in the children-parent relationship as simply due to age, temperament or other child characteristics. Both they and their children contribute to the quality of the relationship.
11. Parents who recognize risk factors in themselves that may place their children at risk for insecure attachment may benefit from counselling or therapy for their own difficulties, and/or to reduce the transmission of risk within the family.

## References

- Allen, J. P., & Hauser, S. T. (1996). *Autonomy and relatedness in adolescent-family interactions as predictors of young adults' states of mind regarding attachment*. *Development and Psychopathology*, 8, 793-809.
- Bandura, A. (1973). *Aggression: A Social Learning Analysis*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bates, J.E, Maslin, C.A, & franhel, K.A (1985) *Attachment Security Mother-Child Interaction and Temperament as Predicator of Behavior Problem Rating at age 3 Years*. *Monographs of Society for Research in Child Development*, 50 (1,2 ) Serial No, 209-167-193.
- Baumrind, Diana. *The influence of parenting style on adolescent competence and substance use*, *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 11,1 (1991): 56-95.
- Buss A H. *The psychology of aggression*. New York: Wiley, 1961. 307 p.
- Conger, Rand D., Gerald R. Patterson, & Xiaojia Ge. *It takes two to replicate: A mediational model for the impact of parents' stress on adolescent adjustment*, *Child Development*, 66,1 (1995): 80-97.
- Cooper, M. L., Shaver, P. R., & Collins, N. L. (1998). *Attachment styles, emotion regulation, and adjustment in adolescence*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 1380-1397.
- Dishion, T.J., G.R. Patterson, M. Stoolmiller, & M.L. Skinner. *Family, school, and behavioral antecedents to early adolescent involvement with antisocial peers*, *Developmental Psychology*, 27,1 (1991): 172-180.
- Dollard, J., et al, *Frustration and Aggression*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1939
- Doyle, A.B. & M.M. Moretti. *Attachment to Parents and Adjustment in Adolescence*. Health Canada, File No. 032ss.H5219-00CYH3, 2000.
- Eron, L.d, Wadler, I.O and Lefkowitz M.M (1971) *Learning of Aggression in Children*, boston Little, Brown
- Eron, L. (1987) *Development of Aggressive Behavior from the Perspective of Developing Behaviorism*, *American Psychologist*, 42, 435, 442

- Feshbach, S. (1964). *The function of aggression and the regulation of aggressive drive*. *Psychological Review*, 71, 257-272.
- Florian, V., Mikulincer, M., & Bucholtz, I. (1995). *Effects of adult attachment style on the perception and search for social support*. *Journal of Psychology*, 129, 665-676.
- Hetherington, E.M, and Park, R.D (1993) *Child Psychology, A contemporary viewpoint*, MC Grawhill, inc, Newyork.
- Hildebrandt, N, & Kuczynski, L (1998) *May, Children Sense of Agency Within Parental-child Other Child Relationships ,Paper Parented at the Tenth Biennial Conference on Child Development, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.*
- Karavasilis, K., A.B. Doyle, & S.K. Margolese. *Links Between Parenting Styles and Adolescent Attachment*. Poster presented at the biennial meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development, Albuquerque, March, 1999.
- Karavasilis, K., Doyle, A.-B., & Margolese, S. K. (1999). *Links between parenting styles and adolescent attachment*. Poster presented at the biennial meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development, Albuquerque, April.
- Kenny, M. E., & Donaldson, G. A. (1991). *Contributions of parental attachment and family structure to the social and psychological functioning of first-year college students*. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 38, 479-486
- Kern, K.A, Kelpac L. and A.K (1996) *Peer Relationships and Preadolescents' perceptions of Security in the Mother-Child Relationship*, *Developmental Psychology* 32-457-466
- Kerns et al. K.A and Steven ,A.C(1997) *Parents Child Attachment in Late Adolescent link to Social Relations an Personality*. *Journal of Youth and Adolescent* ,25,323,342
- Kerns, K. A., & Stevens, A. C. (1996). *Parent-child attachment in late adolescence: Links to social relations and personality*. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 25, 323-342.
- Kerns, Kathryn A. & Amy C. Stevens. *Parent-child attachment in late adolescence: Links to social relations and personality*, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 25,3 (1996): 323-342.
- Larson, R. W., Richards, M. H., Moneta, G., & Holmbeck, G. C. (1996). *Changes in adolescents' daily interactions with their families from ages 10 to 18: Disengagement and transformation*. *Developmental Psychology*, 32, 744-754.
- Larson, R., & Richards, M. H. (1991). *Daily companionship in late childhood and early adolescence: Changing developmental contexts*. *Child Development*, 62, 284-300.
- Laursen, B., & Williams, V. A. (1997). *Perceptions of interdependence and closeness in family and peer relationships among adolescents with and without romantic partners*. In S. Shulman & W. A. Collins (Eds.), *Romantic relationships in adolescence: Developmental perspectives*. *New directions for child development*, No. 78. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass .
- Loeber, R and Southamer-Loeber, M. (1986) *Family Factors as Correlates and Predictors of Juvenile Conduct Problems and Delinquency*. In Tony and n. Morris (Eds) *Crime and Justice .An Annual Review of Research* , & ,29,149, Chicago ,University of Chicago Press
- Milgram, S. *Dynamics of obedience*. Washington: National Science Foundation, 25 January 1961. (Mimeo)
- Milgram, S. *Some conditions of obedience and disobedience to authority*. *Hum. Relat.*, 1963, in press.
- Nada-Raja, Shyamala, Rob McGee, & Warren R. Stanton. *Perceived attachments to parents and peers and psychological well-being in adolescence*, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 21,4 (1992): 471-485.
- Papini, D. R., & Roggman, L. A. (1992). *Adolescent perceived attachment to parents in relation to competence, depression, and anxiety: A longitudinal study*. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 12, 420-440.
- Paterson ,GR.(1976) *The Aggression Child Victim and Architect of a Coercive System*. In E.J.Mash.LA.Haverlynck, and L.C Handy End, *Behavior Malfunaction and Families* ,(pp.267-316) Newyork & Brunner and Mazel
- Paterson, Janis, Jan Pryor, & Jeff Field. *Adolescent attachment to parents and friends in relation to aspects of self-esteem*, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24,3 (1995): 365-376.
- Reid J.D, and Patterson ,GR(1989) *the Development of Antisocial Behavior Patterns in childhood and Adolescence -Personality and Aggression-European Journal of Psychology* 50 ,1045-9
- Stattin, h. and Kerr, M(200) *Parental Monitoring : A Re-inter Protection* , *Child Development* , & 1, !072-1085
- Steinberg, L., S.M. Dornbusch, & B.B. Brown. *Ethnic differences in adolescent achievement: An ecological perspective*. *American Psychologist*, 47,6 (1992): 723-729
- Tedeschi, J. T. (1983). *Social influence theory and aggression*. In: Geen A.P., K. H. (ED.), *Theoretical and empirical reviews*. Academic Press, New York.

- Vaughn, B.E., Taraldson, B.J., Crichton, L., & Eyalan, B. (1981) The assessment of infant Temperament Questionnaire, *Infant Behavior and Development*, 4, 1, 17
- Verama, P. and Tramas, S. (1998) development of Scale to measure Parental Personal Social and Academic Involvement, *Indian Journal of Psychology Issues* 6 (1-2) 42-51.
- Voss, K. (1999) *Understanding adolescent antisocial behaviour from attachment theory and coercion theory perspectives*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Concordia University.