

## CHAPTER - 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature pertaining to the study “Aggression and Prosocial Behaviour in Middle School Boys – A Multimodal Approach” is discussed under the following headings:

- Aggression in middle school boys
- Prosocial behaviour
- Theories of prosocial behaviour

#### **Aggression**

A study was conducted by Giancola (2002) on Alcohol-Related Aggression during the College Years: Theories, Risk Factors and Policy Implications on alcohol-related aggression with a focus on college students. The results indicated that alcohol consumption facilitates aggressive behaviour and increases the risk of being the victim of a violent act, particularly in heavy drinkers. Results from these studies are then placed into a context by reviewing 12 influential theories of aggression and alcohol-related aggression.

#### **Aggression in Middle School boys**

A study was conducted by Shekarey, Ladani, Rostami and Jamshid (2013) on The Relationship between the Social Intelligence and Aggression to investigate the relationship between the social intelligence and aggression among the high school boy students in Kashan city, Iran. The study incorporated 3850 high school boy students. 423 subjects were chosen through multistage cluster sampling method. Measurement tools such as Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire (1992) and Thout Social Intelligence Questionnaire (1995) were used. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between the social intelligence and aggression and it was also found out that the more students’ social intelligence is, the less their aggressive behaviour become.

Schwartz, Gorman, Nakamoto and Tara (2006) examined the Popularity, Social Acceptance, and Aggression in Adolescent Peer Groups: Links with Academic Performance and School Attendance focusing on popularity and social acceptance as

predictors of academic engagement. A sample of 342 adolescents (approximate average age of 14) were surveyed. Popularity, social acceptance, and aggression were assessed with a peer nomination inventory, and data on academic engagement were obtained from school records. For adolescents who were highly aggressive, increases in popularity were associated with increases in unexplained absences and decreases in grade point average. Conversely, changes in social acceptance were not predictive of changes in grade point average or unexplained absences. These results highlight the importance of multidimensional conceptualizations of social standing for research on school adjustment during adolescence and emphasize the potential risks associated with popularity.

O'Donnell, Stueve, Myint, Duran, Agronick and Wilson (2006) had done a study on Middle School Aggression and Subsequent Intimate Partner Physical Violence and examined the relationship between middle-school aggressive behaviours and young adults' experiences as victims and perpetrators of intimate partner physical violence. Surveys were conducted with 977 8th graders who were resurveyed as young adults, when lifetime partner violence was assessed. It was found that the prevalence of middle-school aggression and subsequent partner violence are high among both males and females. To reduce partner violence through young adulthood, findings suggest the importance of early interventions that help adolescents learn non-violent strategies for resolving conflicts in cross-gender relationships.

A study on effects of violent video games on aggressive behaviour, aggressive cognition, aggressive affect, physiological arousal, and prosocial behaviour was conducted by Anderson and Bushman (2001). The study showed that playing violent video games will increase aggressive behaviour. A meta-analytic review of the video-game research literature reveals that violent video games increase aggressive behaviour in children and young adults. Experimental and non-experimental studies with males and females in laboratory and field settings support this conclusion. Analyses also reveal that exposure to violent video games increases physiological arousal and aggression-related thoughts and feelings. Playing violent video games also decreases prosocial behaviour.

A study on Social-cognitive and behavioural correlates of aggression and victimization in boys' play groups was done by Schwartz, Dodge, Coie, Hubbard, Cillessen, Lemerise. & Bateman (1998) contrived play group procedure was utilized to

examine the behavioural and social-cognitive correlates of reactive aggression, proactive aggression, and victimization via peers. Eleven play groups, each of which consisted of six familiar African-American 8-year-old boys, met for 45-min sessions on five consecutive days. Social-cognitive interviews were conducted following the second and fourth sessions. Play group interactions were videotaped and examined by trained observers. High rates of proactive aggression were associated with positive outcome expectancies for aggression/assertion, frequent displays of assertive social behaviour, and low rates of submissive behaviour. Reactive aggression was associated with hostile attributional tendencies and frequent victimization by peers. Victimization was associated with submissive behaviour, hostile attributional bias, reactive aggression, and negative outcome expectations for aggression/assertion. These results demonstrate that there is a theoretically coherent and empirically distinct set of correlates associated with each of the examined aggression subtypes, and with victimization by peers.

A study on Exposure to Media Violence and Other Correlates of Aggressive Behaviour in Preschool Children was done by Daly and Perez (2010). This article examines the play behaviour of 70 preschool children and its relationship to television violence and regulatory status. Linear regression analysis showed that violent program content and poor self-regulation were independently and significantly associated with overall and physical aggression. Advanced maternal age and child age and better self-regulation were independently and significantly associated with prosocial behaviour. *t*-test analysis shows that two other statistically significant factors associated with overall aggression were gender and the lack of a father figure in the home. Analysis of *t*-tests showed a statistically significant relationship between children who watched violent content alone and verbal aggression. Multiple regression analysis established that poor self-regulation was the biggest predictor of overall aggression and that overall aggression was significantly related to gender. Results suggest limiting the amount of violent programming that preschool children see. Results also indicate that children benefit from interactive regulatory support.

A study on School Aggression and Dispositional Aggression among Middle School Boys by Ballard, Mary, Rattley, Kelvin, Fleming, Willie, Ashley (2004) examined the relationship between dispositional (trait) aggression and administrative reports of school aggression among 100 adolescent male participants from an urban

middle school. Aggression was fairly common among the sample; 58 boys had a record of school aggression, and many of those were repeat offenders. Dispositional aggression was significantly, positively correlated with verbal and physical aggression at school. Regression analyses indicated that dispositional aggression accounted for a substantial amount of the variance in administrative reports of school aggression.

A study was conducted by Sullivan, Farrell and Kliewer (2006) on Peer victimization in early adolescence: Association between physical and relational victimization and drug use, aggression, and delinquent behaviours among urban middle school students and examined associations between two forms of peer victimization, physical and relational, and externalizing behaviours including drug use, aggression, and delinquent behaviours. A sample of 276 predominantly African American eighth graders were surveyed. Regression analyses indicated that physical victimization was significantly related to cigarette and alcohol use but not to advanced alcohol and marijuana use; relational victimization contributed uniquely to all categories of drug use after controlling for physical victimization. Physical victimization was also significantly related to physical and relational aggression and delinquent behaviours, and relational victimization made a unique contribution in the concurrent prediction of these behaviours. Relational victimization was more strongly related to physical aggression and marijuana use among girls than among boys, but more strongly related to relational aggression among boys than among girls. These findings provide information about the generalizability of prior research and have important implications for intervention efforts.

A study was done by Espelage (2002) on Bullying in Early Adolescence: The Role of the Peer Group demonstrated the seriousness of bullying in American schools. In a nationally representative sample of over 15,686 students in the United States (grades 6 through 10), 29.9% self-reported frequent involvement in bullying at school, with 13 percent participating as a bully, 10.9% as a victim, and 6% as both (Nansel et al., 2001). Aggression and violence during childhood and adolescence have been the focus of much research over the past several decades (Loeber and Hay, 1997; Olweus, 1979). These researchers have found that serious forms of aggression remain relatively stable from childhood through adulthood; however, Loeber and Hay (1997) argue that mild forms of aggression may not begin for some children until early or late

adolescence. Despite Loeber and Hay's findings, very little research has been conducted on mild forms of aggression, such as bullying, during the middle years. One notable gap in the evolving literature on bullying and victimization during early adolescence is the role that peers play in promoting bullying and victimization by either reinforcing the aggressor, failing to intervene to stop the victimization, or affiliating with students who bully.

A study was conducted by Levy (2014) on Boys Who Play High School Sports More Likely to Be Abusive in Relationships. One in three young people experience physical, psychological, or sexual violence in romantic relationships at some time. It was confirmed that this association also exists in teen athletes. Survey data was collected from California high school students in grades 9 through 12. It was found that 1,648 male high school athletes had been involved in at least one relationship with a female for more than a week. The teens replied to the survey about their feelings on gender and what's expected from males and females in relationships. The boys also discussed their engagement in several high school sports, including basketball, football, soccer, volleyball, wrestling, baseball, tennis, golf, swimming, cross-country, and track and field. 276 of the boys reported being involved in some type of relationship abuse. It was found that those who held hyper-masculine attitudes were three times more likely to have recently abused their female partners.

Bettencourt, Talley, Benjamin and Valentine (2006) investigated on Personality and Aggressive Behaviour Under Provoking and Neutral Conditions: A Meta-Analytic Review to understand the relation between personality and aggressive behaviour, under provoking and non provoking conditions. The qualitative review revealed that some personality variables influenced aggressive behaviour under both neutral and provocation conditions, whereas others influenced aggressive behaviour only under provocation. Studies that assessed personality variables and that directly measured aggressive behaviour were included in the quantitative review. Analyses revealed that trait aggressiveness and trait irritability influenced aggressive behaviour under both provoking and neutral conditions but that other personality variables (e.g., trait anger, Type A personality, dissipation–rumination) influenced aggressive behaviour only under provoking conditions.

A study was conducted by Hassan, Salleh, Bin ,Osman, Nizam, Azarian and Sabaghpour (2009) on Effects of Watching Violence Movies on the Attitudes Concerning Aggression among Middle School boys. The purpose of this study was to contribute to the state of the research by predicting and comparing attitudes about aggression among adolescent boys on the basis of their exposure to violence in movies. This study used a survey research design. Two hundred and sixteen adolescent boys aged 13-17 were selected from seven international schools located in Kuala Lumpur. The data were collected using four instruments: the Demographic Questionnaire, the Media Viewing Habit Questionnaire, the Affection toward movie violence scale, and the Attitudes concerning Aggression Scale. The results indicated that adolescent boys spend a significant amount of time watching movies on TV and DVD/CD as well. In addition, they are exposed to substantial amounts of media violence. At the same time, parental involvement with their adolescents' movie viewing is relatively limited. Further results showed that there is significant difference between heavy and light viewers of movie violence in any dimension of their attitudes about aggression. Adolescents with "violent" movies preferred, however, were significantly more supportive of the attitude that aggression is acceptable and warranted, as compared to those who prefer movies with little or no violence. Additional results demonstrated that the "aggression-acceptable" attitude was significantly related to a set of variables. The strongest predictors of this attitude in adolescent boys were affection toward movies, movie viewing habits, and the adolescents' movies preferred.

### **Prosocial Behaviour**

Adekunle and Akoko (2013) examined on Roles of Personality Types, Emotional Intelligence and Gender Differences on Prosocial Behaviour and investigated the influence of five –factor personality factors (FFP), emotional intelligence (EI) and gender differences on prosocial behaviour (PSB) among undergraduates in Nigeria. Cross-sectional survey design was adopted to tap information from 200 randomly selected undergraduates. They responded to a carefully designed questionnaire with 4 sections. Five hypotheses were tested. The results showed that there were significant relationships between the variables of study. The first step in the hierarchical regression showed that the independent and joint contributions of age, gender, religion and educational level on PSB were not

significant. The second step which involved the FFP did not have significant independent and joint contribution on PSB except for conscientiousness [ $R^2 = .34$ ,  $t = 7.08$ ;  $p < .01$ ]. In the third step EI also had no significant contribution but the overall joint contribution (with other variables) to PSB increased to 35.3%. However, high EI increased PSB [ $t(198) = 12.36$ ;  $p < .01$ ] but gender did not have significant effect on PSB. The findings were discussed based on the existing literature and important recommendations were made.

A study was conducted by Marryat, Thompson, Minnis, and Wilson (2014) on Associations between social isolation, pro-social behaviour and emotional development in preschool aged children: a population based survey of kindergarten staff. Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) were completed by staff in preschool establishments for over 10,000 children in their preschool year (aged 4,5 ).Correlations between scores and were explored. Regression models examined the independent relationships between three social isolation variables, taken from the SDQ Peer Relationship Problems, Pro-social Behaviour and Emotional Symptoms subscales, controlling. Results showed substantial overlaps between problem scores. Regression models found all social isolation variables to be significantly correlated with social and emotional functioning. Different types of social isolation appeared to relate to different psychological domains, with unpopularity having a stronger relationship with poor pro-social skills, whereas being solitary was more strongly linked to poorer emotional functioning.

### **Theories of Prosocial Behaviour**

Eisenberg, Eggum and Giunta (2010) examined Empathy-related Responding: Associations with Prosocial Behaviour, Aggression, and Intergroup Relations. Empathy-related responding, including empathy, sympathy, and personal distress, has been implicated in conceptual models and theories about prosocial behaviour and altruism, aggression and antisocial behaviour, and intergroup relationships. Conceptual arguments and empirical findings related to each of these topics are reviewed. In general, there is evidence that empathy and/or sympathy are important correlates of, and likely contributors to, other-oriented prosocial behaviour, the inhibition of aggression and antisocial behaviour and the quality of intergroup relationships.

Daniel, Mengstie, Sellakumar and Begashaw (2014) *had done a study on Pro-Social Behaviours and Identity Statuses among Adolescent Students*. The purpose of this study was to investigate prosocial behaviour and identity status of adolescent students in Secondary and Preparatory School. A self report questionnaire was used to collect data from 137 adolescent students using simple random sampling. Quantitative analyses (both descriptive and inferential statistical) were used to analyze the obtained data. The study shows that most students did not achieve their identity. Female students reported higher involvement in emotional, altruism, anonymous and public prosocial behaviours. There was significant mean difference in prosocial behaviours involvements among students. Identity foreclosed students reported highest involvement in emotional, dire, compliant, and public prosocial behaviours. Besides, students who have achieved their identity reported more involvement in altruism and anonymous types of prosocial behaviours. However, students with identity diffusion reported least involvement in all forms of prosocial behaviours.

A study was conducted by Pavey, Greitemeyer and Sparks (2011) on *Highlighting Relatedness Promotes Prosocial Motives and Behaviour*. According to self-determination theory, people have three basic psychological needs: relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Of these, the authors reasoned that relatedness need satisfaction is particularly important for promoting prosocial behaviour because of the increased sense of connectedness to others that this engenders. In Experiment 1, the authors manipulated relatedness, autonomy, competence, or gave participants a neutral task, and found that highlighting relatedness led to higher interest in volunteering and intentions to volunteer relative to the other conditions. Experiment 2 found that writing about relatedness experiences promoted feelings of connectedness to others, which in turn predicted greater prosocial intentions. Experiment 3 found that relatedness manipulation participants donated significantly more money to charity than did participants given a neutral task. The results suggest that highlighting relatedness increases engagement in prosocial activities and are discussed in relation to the conflict and compatibility between individual and social outcomes.

Siu, Shek and Frank (2012) had done a study on *Predictors of Prosocial Behaviour among Chinese High School Students in Hong Kong* and examined the correlates and predictors of prosocial behaviour among Chinese adolescents in Hong Kong. A sample of 518 high school students responded to a questionnaire containing

measures of antisocial and prosocial behaviour, prosocial norms, pragmatic values, moral reasoning, and empathy. Analyses showed that there were gender differences in some of the measures. While correlation analyses showed that parental education, prosocial norms, pragmatic values, moral reasoning, and empathy were related to prosocial behaviour, regression analyses showed that prosocial norms, pragmatic values, and empathy dimensions (personal distress and empathy) were key predictors of it. The findings are largely consistent with theoretical predictions other than the negative relationship between personal distress and prosocial behaviour. The study also underscores the importance of values and norms in predicting prosocial behaviour

Hardy and Carlo (2005) examined Religiosity and prosocial behaviours in adolescence: the mediating role of prosocial values to examine the hypothesis that religiosity would be differentially related to six types of adolescent prosocial behaviour and that these relations would be mediated by the prosocial value of kindness. Self-report data were collected from 142 high school students (63 per cent female; 91 per cent White; M age = 16.8, S=.80). Religiosity was a significant positive predictor of kindness, as well as compliant, anonymous and altruistic prosocial behaviour, but not public, dire and emotional prosocial behaviour. Associations between religiosity and both compliant and altruistic prosocial behaviours were mediated by kindness. Direct and indirect paths were found between religiosity and anonymous prosocial behaviour. Thus, partial support was found for the mediational hypothesis. Discussion focused on the utility of distinguishing among different types of prosocial behaviours and on the role of religion and values in promoting moral education.

Johnson and Johnson (2011) had done a study on *The Roots of Social Dominance: Aggression, Prosocial Behaviour, and Social Interdependence* to examine the nature of dominant students in Grades 3–5 in a mid western school system in the United States. Previous research has indicated 2 ways a student may gain dominance—through bullying and prosocial behaviours. A cluster analysis for dominant children was conducted using social interdependence attitude scores, children's self-reports of bullying and prosocial behaviours, and teacher reports of bullying and prosocial behaviours. Dominant children were clustered into cooperative-prosocial, competitive-aggressive, and individualistic groups.

Competitive-aggressive children received higher teacher ratings of dominance than did cooperative-prosocial children, there was no significant among the clusters on perceived leadership by peers, and cooperative-prosocial children tended to have teachers who used more cooperative learning in their classroom.

A study by Desai, Sarin, Cavallo and Potenza (2010) was conducted on Video-Gaming Among High School Students: Health Correlates, Gender Differences, and Problematic Gaming and anonymously surveyed 4028 adolescents about gaming and reported problems with gaming and other health behaviours. A total of 51.2% of the sample reported gaming (76.3% of boys and 29.2% of girls). There were no negative health correlates of gaming in boys and lower odds of smoking regularly; however, girls who reported gaming were less likely to report depression and more likely to report getting into serious fights and carrying a weapon to school. Among gamers, 4.9% reported problematic gaming, defined as reporting trying to cut back, experiencing an irresistible urge to play, and experiencing a growing tension that could only be relieved by playing. Boys were more likely to report these problems (5.8%) than girls (3.0%). Correlates of problematic gaming included regular cigarette smoking, drug use, depression, and serious fights. Results suggest that gaming is largely normative in boys and not associated with many health factors. In girls, however, gaming seems to be associated with more externalizing behaviours and fewer internalizing symptoms.

Torrente, Cappella, and Neal (2014) examined Children's Positive School Behaviours and Social Preference in Urban Elementary Classrooms and examined the associations between prosocial and academically oriented behaviours and social preference as a function of individual (i.e., gender), developmental (i.e., grade) and contextual factors (i.e., group descriptive norms). Data were gathered from a sample of 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade children (51% male, 97.5% African American) in 34 classrooms from high-poverty inner-city neighborhoods. Multilevel analyses indicated that individual, developmental, and contextual factors moderated the association between children's prosocial and academically oriented behaviours and social preference. Taken together, results from this study support theoretical models emphasizing the relational and contextual nature of children's social preference in the peer group.

Paulus, Kühn, Licata, Sodian and Meinhardt (2012) had done a study on Neural correlates of prosocial behaviour in infancy: Different neurophysiological mechanisms support the emergence of helping and comforting. They examined the neural processes related to different forms of prosocial behaviour in infancy. Behavioural analyses revealed a negative relation between infants' performances in the helping and comforting task. Greater left frontal cortical activation was associated with infants' understanding of the other's distress as well as empathic responding in the comforting task, whereas greater right temporal activation was related to infants' instrumental helping. These findings reveal the neural correlates of the earliest forms of prosocial action and show that different neurophysiological activation patterns are related to the emergence of instrumental helping and comforting in early development.

Waxler, Cole, Welsh and Fox (2009) explored the Psychophysiological Correlates of Empathy and Prosocial Behaviours in preschool children with behaviour problems. They focused on empathic and prosocial orientations in preschool children who vary in externalizing problems. Children were categorized as low, moderate or high risk. Hypothetical and real encounters with others in distress were used to examine children's affect, behaviour, autonomic activity and social cognitions. Children witnessed a person in distress. Moderate and high risk children were less able than low risk children to remain positively engaged with distress victims. Girls showed more prosocial behaviour than boys and boys showed more anger than girls. Girls showed higher skin conductance than boys, with high risk girls showing the highest levels. Higher heart rate (and heart rate deceleration) predicted empathetic concern and prosocial behaviour, whereas lower heart rate was associated with aggression and avoidance.

Three studies were conducted by Gentile et al (2009) on The Effects of Prosocial Video Games on Prosocial Behaviours in three countries with three age groups to test this hypothesis. In the correlational study, Singaporean middle-school students who played more prosocial games behaved more prosocially. In the two longitudinal samples of Japanese children and adolescents, prosocial game play predicted later increases in prosocial behaviour. In the experimental study, U.S. undergraduates randomly assigned to play prosocial games behaved more prosocially toward another student. These similar results across different methodologies, ages,

and cultures provide robust evidence a prosocial game content effect, and provide support for the General Learning Model.

A study on Effects of Video Game Violence on Prosocial and Antisocial Behaviours was conducted by Levy (2004) to explore whether video-game play can influence the antisocial and prosocial behaviours of the players. It was hypothesized that prosocial and antisocial behaviours would depend on the presence of violence in games. Male and female gamers from a wide range of age and racial/ethnic backgrounds at two arcades were observed for instances of prosocial and antisocial behaviours when playing against each other or teamed together against the computer. Observation took place for approximately 2 to 3 hours on each of three days. Chi-squared tests were used to compare for differences in behaviour gamers exhibited in non-violent and violent games. Contrary to the hypothesis, no antisocial behaviour was observed in the sample. Prosocial behaviour was seen occasionally, but its appearance was not significantly different in violent and non-violent gamers, indicating that prosocial behaviour was independent of game violence.

McDonald, Wang, Menzer, Rubin and Booth (2011) had done a study on Prosocial Behaviour Moderates the Effects of Aggression on Young Adolescents' Friendships and explored how prosocial behaviour may moderate how aggression is related to the features of adolescents' friendships. Young adolescents (N=910) completed friendship nominations in the fall and spring of their first year of middle school. Behavioural nominations of aggression and prosocial behaviour were also collected in the fall. A subsample (N=374) of adolescents and their reciprocated friends reported on friendship quality. Prosocial behaviour moderated how aggression was related to the likelihood of having a mutual best friendship in the fall. Analyses revealed that aggression was negatively related to friendship quality. Examination of temporal patterns in best friendships indicated that when prosocial behaviour was low, aggression was marginally predictive of having different best friends in the fall and spring relative to having a stable best friendship across the school year.

Wentzel and McNamara (2013) researched on Interpersonal Relationships, Emotional Distress, and Prosocial Behaviour in Middle School. Based on theories of peer socialization, it was hypothesized that being accepted by peers would have a direct relation to prosocial behaviour. In addition, emotional distress was examined as a possible mediator between adolescents' perceptions of family and peer relationships

and prosocial outcomes. In a sample of 167 sixth-grade students, hypotheses were supported in that peer acceptance was related directly to prosocial behaviour and emotional distress mediated relations between perceived support from peers and prosocial behaviour. Family cohesion was related negatively to distress but not to prosocial outcomes. The roles of parents and peers in promoting young adolescents' social competence, as well as the importance of emotional well-being for positive social adjustment in middle school are discussed.

Kokko, Tremblay, Lacourse, Nagin and Vitaro (2006) had done a study on Trajectories of prosocial behaviour and physical aggression between 6 and 12 years of age were identified for a sample (N = 51,025) of males. The trajectories were then used to predict school dropout and physical violence at age 17. Using a group-based semi-parametric method, two trajectories of prosociality (low and moderate declining) and three trajectories of physical aggression (low, moderate, and high declining) were obtained. Only a small minority (3.4%) of the boys were characterized by both high aggression and moderate prosociality. Physical aggression predicted both school dropout and physical violence, but contrary to expectations, prosocial behaviour did not have additive or protective effects.

## **Conclusion**

The review of literature clearly indicates that a number of researches have been done on aggression and prosocial behaviour in middle school boys. The review also showed studies on intervention for aggression and enhancement of prosocial behaviour in school children.