

# Perception of Parental Bonding and Tendency to Perpetrate Aggressive Behaviour in a Sample of Nigerian Students

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**Abstract-** The research investigated the extent to which the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour (measured by the Aggressive Questionnaire) among some secondary students in Nigeria is influenced by parental bonding (measured by the Parental Bonding Instrument). Cross-sectional survey was used to collect data from a total of 250 randomly selected respondents aged 15-19 years. They comprised of males 140 (56%) and females 110 (44%). It was found that parental bonding had significant influence on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour ( $F = 71.361$ ,  $df = 3,249$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This finding suggests that students who perceived their parents as caring reported fewer tendencies to perpetrate aggressive acts. Therefore, psychologists need to provide suitable psychological interventions that are targeted towards both parents and children in order to reduce incidence of aggression among adolescent learners. It is recommended that interventions that incorporate social cognitive theory (SCT) components that focus on helping parents to deter their children's involvement in aggression are vital.

**Keywords-** Parental Bonding; Aggression; Aggressive Behaviour; Students

## I. INTRODUCTION

Aggressive behaviour, bullying, violence, and other related behavioural problems among youth and adolescents at school are growing social problems that are generating concern among different stakeholders around the world [1-7]. In Nigeria, these problems appear in form of destruction of school and public properties, cheating in examinations, alcoholism, drug abuse and addiction, sexual offences, stealing, truancy, rudeness, fighting with others, bullying, verbal abuse, and defiance of constituted authorities [8]. Personal observations of the researchers also revealed that in most secondary schools in Nigeria, aggressive students disrupt classes on daily basis. In addition, headlines from different media – radio, television, and newspapers featured violence directed against school property and classmates, as well as aggression against teachers and peers which have been disrupting the smooth running of the schools.

From the available studies, most research on aggression among adolescents and college-age students (e.g. [9, 10]) studied aggression from the perspective of victims rather than that of perpetrators. The present study was motivated to fill a gap in literature by focusing on students who perpetrate aggression against other students. Perpetrators are students who indicated on self-reported measure of aggression that they inflict aggressive acts on others. Social learning theory provides the justification for this perspective [11]. The theory posits that children learn through observation and imitation, when violence is rampant in a society, and there is lack of effective controlling agents, children are more likely to learn that aggression is normal way of handling frustration. Nevertheless, children are socialised to manage their emotions and control their anger when they enter school [12]. So the question is why are they still doing it? And what are the factors responsible for this behaviour?

Aggression is any form of behaviour whose proximate intention is to harm another person [13]. To Shaffer (2002) [14]; Baron and Richardson (1994) [15], aggression is a behaviour aimed at causing physical or psychological harm or pain to another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment. Aggressive behaviour is defined by Fraczek and Zumkley (1992) [16] as behaviour directed towards causing harm to others. According to Wolman (1989) [17], aggressive behaviour is the acts of behavioural responses of an organism that display the quantity of aggression while aggressiveness is the tendency to display hostility by performing act of aggression. It is a behavioural trait characterised by hostile attack, usually upon someone or something else [18]. In this study, aggression is defined as a tendency to perpetrate acts that can inflict physical, psychological, and emotional harm or pain on others.

There are types of aggression, depending on the intentions of the aggressor and the situation that stimulated the aggressive response. For example, Buss (1963) [20] classified aggression into three: physical-verbal, active-passive, and direct-indirect aggression. Physical-verbal aggression refers to aggression expressed through physical acts like hitting or verbal acts such as threats. The active-passive aspect is actively engaging in an act aimed at harming someone (e.g. yelling or scolding), with passive aggression referring to causing harm by refusing to do something. Direct aggression involves face-to-face confrontation between the aggressor and the target, like scolding, threats, screaming at another person or hitting that person etc., whereas indirect aggression is defined as any behaviour aimed at inflicting harm on another living being that is delivered

circuitously through another person or object, even if it is not intended to harm someone [21]. It is a mode of aggression that avoids counterattack. In the words of Buss (1961) [22], it may involve both ‘round about’ aggression (the hated person is not attacked directly, but by devious means) and ‘undirected’ aggression (wherein there is discharge of negative affect against no one in particular). Feshbach (1969) [23] defined it as responses which result in pain to a stimulus person through rejection and exclusion or isolation, including such actions as ignoring or denying requests. It also may be either physical or verbal; for example, indirect aggression might involve causing harm to someone’s property, or spreading false rumours about someone.

Richardson and Hammock (2000) [24] have also considered non-direct aggression that cause harm by disrupting relationships. Crick and Grotpeter (1995) [25] defined relational aggression as “harming others through purposeful manipulation and damage of peer relationships”; including behaviours such as exclusion and telling the target they won’t be friends anymore. These forms of relationally oriented aggression include both direct and indirect behaviours. For example, telling a target they won’t be friends is a direct, verbal approach, and denying a request is similarly direct. This form of aggression also involves primarily verbal aggression that causes harm by disrupting relationships.

Commonly, researchers (e.g. [26-28, 11]) viewed aggression as hostile and instrumental, whereas others such as [29, 30] prefer to classify aggression as proactive or reactive. Because proactive and reactive types of aggression have been the focus of research and offer both an explanation and description of aggression [19], they receive emphasis here.

Roland and Idsøe (2001) [31], Dodge (1991) [32], defined reactive aggression as a tendency to express negative behaviour when one is angry, while proactive aggression is the tendency to attack someone to meet a goal, achieve some material, or social rewards. For example, if the child wants to have an object that belongs to another child, the proactively aggressive child will simply use aggression to take the object from the other child. When the aggressive behaviour yields the desired reward, the child is more likely to engage in proactive aggression the next time he or she intends to meet a goal. Conversely, reactively aggressive children do not seek to meet goals through their aggressive behaviour. Instead, those children react negatively to perceived or actual threats and are easily irritated and provoked [19].

Perpetrating aggressive behaviour has negative consequences for both the victims and perpetrators. For examples, adolescents who are victimized could be severely traumatized [33], their school adaptation and academic performance could be compromised [34], physical health and emotional wellbeing could be impacted negatively [35]. Victims can also experience physical injury, psychological distress (e.g. depression, traumatic stress reactions, and anxiety), relationship difficulties, substance abuse, self-harm or suicidal behaviours, susceptible to victimization by others, and increased potential to be an aggressor [36, 37]. And for the perpetrators, though they are rewarded by getting what they want in the short-term (e.g. status, material object, empowerment), the long-term effects of their aggressive style may negatively affect their development, especially their capacity for meeting their needs in socially acceptable ways [36]. When peer-to-peer aggression is not stopped, the misuse of power to satisfy personal “wants” is reinforced as a coping strategy [36]. More, aggression has implications for school outcomes, future behaviours, such as future emotional and behavioural difficulties (e.g. dating violence and cyber harassment) or engagement in other antisocial activities (e.g. theft, property destruction), and problems with substance use and abuse [38-40].

Nevertheless, not all aggressive students are aggressive for the same reasons. Then it seems that students’ aggressive behaviour stems from a wide spectrum of factors. But in this paper, attention is focused on the quality of the relationships that bind the parents and the child. In literature (see Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979) [41], the attachment between the parents and the child is labelled parental bonding. This construct is associated with psychosocial and behavioural adjustment problems in the adolescent period [42-45]. The quality of adolescent–parent interactions influence, and may determine, the way adolescents perceive themselves in relation to others, their attitudes, and their behaviours [46, 47]. As noted by Paley, Conger, and Harold (2000) [48], children establish their first social relations with parental figures and the nature of those parent–child relationships and the context in which they are sustained may determine the social skills and social relations the child will develop with others later in life. Also, conduct-disordered behaviours characterised as anti-social and socially aggressive behaviours appear to be developed and maintained within the family environment [49]. To be consistent with literature, in this study, emphasis is placed on the influence of parental bonding on tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour among secondary school students. To the best knowledge of the authors, there is scarcity of research in this direction among in-school adolescents in Nigeria.

Taking into account findings of previous studies and the expected influence of parental bonding on aggressive tendency, as the objective of the study, we addressed the possible influence of perception of parental bonding on tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour in a Nigerian secondary school student sample. Understanding the influence of parental bonding on aggressive tendency of students provides important insights for developing empirical models and preventive interventions.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The attachment theory (Bowlby, 1980, 1973) [50, 51] posits that attachment bonds between the child and care giver are the basis for developing internal representations of the relationship between self and others and, accordingly, they serve as templates for future relationships, including those involving peers. The attachment figure provides a haven of safety and comfort to which the child can turn in times of distress or threat. She/he also provides a secure base for exploration of the

environment in the absence of danger. When the attachment figure is sensitive to the child's needs and provides warm and loving care, the child's self-confidence to relate easily with others is maximally developed. Such children are reported to receive others warmly, show few signs of emotional dysfunction, and rarely engage in antisocial act (Grossman & Grossman, 1990 cited in Marshall, Hudson, & Hodkinson, 1993) [52]. In summary, secure parent-child attachment bonds are formed when the care giver is confident, responsive, warm, affectionate, empathic, trustworthy, and consistent. Then children rear in this atmosphere grow up to be sensitive, warm, affectionate, and tend to seek out and attain good relations with others outside the home. In contrast, when attachment bonds are characterised by insecurity, rejection, lack of warmth, inconsistency, and abuse, the child will develop either avoidant or anxious ambivalent interpersonal style.

In an attempt to describe parental relationships from the standpoint of the parent-child attachment, Parker et al. (1979) [41] developed the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI), which measures two dimensions of parenting - care and protection that influenced parent-child bond. As for the care dimension, prior studies (e.g. [53, 54]) indicated that emotional bonding, support, and proximity with parents during childhood and adolescence have beneficial effects on psychosocial development. They also serve as insulators against involvement in antisocial behaviour. These links appear consistent across cultures and across different social groups [55, 56]. In contrast, other findings revealed that a negative family environment, characterized by high levels of family conflict, coercion, or hostility, [57, 58, 49], poor or negative communication with parents [59, 44], emotional detachment [60], and lack of parental support [61, 62], has a substantial and negative effect on the development of particular social skills in children, such as the capacity to identify non-aggressive solutions to interpersonal problems [63, 64], or to be empathic [65, 66]. Adolescents living in such a toxic family context display personal difficulties and increased risks of developing deviant behaviours, such as aggression, vandalism, theft, and alcohol and drug use [67, 68].

The second dimension, protection, parental protection/control calls for the proactive role exerted by parents on their children. This parental practice promotes the respect of rules and social conventions, in order to assure the social integration and success of children [69]. This dimension also pertains to the establishment of rules and limits that will not be broken. Perris, Arrindell, and Eisemann, (1994) [70] have concluded that affectionate, accepting and caring parental behaviours are regarded as protective factors, while hostile, rejecting, overprotecting and punitive parental behaviours are generally seen as risk factors for the development of behaviour problems.

In Nigeria, perception of parental bonding is more likely to be predictive of tendency to perpetrate aggressive acts among in-school adolescents because in socialising children, more emphasis seems to be placed on obedience and compliance with parental instructions. hence, it is logical to posit that under this circumstance, individuals who perceived their parents as exhibiting excessive parental control and intrusion, with little or no verbal exchange may develop low self-esteem, low self-concept, easily frustrated, and perpetrate aggressive behaviour compared to those who perceived parental acceptance of independence and autonomy. Individuals who perceived their parents as restrictive may behave appropriately when the parents are around (out of fear of punishment) but misbehave on their own. Therefore, it is expected that students who perceive their parents as caring compared to those who perceive their parents as cold, neglecting, and rejecting are more likely to develop high self-esteem and self-control, behave appropriately, and rarely engaging in aggressive acts even in the absence of their parents. Unfortunately, very little is known about the contribution of parental bonding to the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour among secondary school students in Nigeria. In addition, much of the work done in this area is on Western societies; there is also a need to beam research light on Nigeria adolescents.

#### *A. Study Hypothesis*

Based on the literature review, we proposed a significant influence of parental bonding on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour, so that students who perceive their parents as caring will report fewer tendencies to perpetrate aggressive behaviour compared to students who perceive their parents as overprotective.

### III. METHOD

#### *A. Research Design*

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. The independent variable is parental bonding occurring at four levels (paternal care, paternal overprotection, maternal care, and maternal overprotection). Tendency to engage in aggressive behaviour is the dependent variable.

#### *B. Participants*

Participants in the study were 250 randomly selected from senior secondary school arm of eight public secondary schools in one of the towns in Ogun State, South-western Nigeria. Age ranged from 15 to 19 (mean age = 15.7; S.d= 3.6); 140 (56%) were boys and 110 (44%) were girls.

### C. Instruments

A self-reported questionnaire was used to collect data on parental bonding, aggressive behaviour and demographic information about the respondents.

**Parental Bonding (PB).** The Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI) [41] was used to assess self-reported sense of care and protection from the mother and father separately. *PBI* consists of 25-item that measures basic parenting styles as perceived by a child. The measure is retrospective, which means that adolescents respond to statements based on their memories of parental behaviour in the early years of their lives. In this study, participants respond to the same items for mother and father respectively. There are two subscales: care and protection. Care items (12 items) relate to a parental style that may range from coldness, indifference and neglect, to affection, emotional warmth, empathy, and reciprocity. This subscale includes items like (my mother/my father) "Spoke to me with a warm and friendly voice", "*Enjoyed talking things over with me*", "*Frequently smiled at me*", "*Did not seem to understand what I needed or wanted*". Protection items (13 items) define a dimension ranging from parental control and overprotection, intrusion and infantilisation to parental allowance, independence, and the development of autonomy. This subscale includes items like (my mother/my father) "*Did not want me to grow up*", "*Tried to control everything I did*", "*Invaded my privacy*". Participants rated their parents on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 = very unlike to 3 = very like (my mother, or my father). Two scores are obtained for each parent, a care score and a protection score. The care scale and the protection scale were used together as a bonding instrument. Scores are computed so that the higher the score, the higher the care or the protection exercised by the parent. For example, low scores below the mean value on the paternal/maternal care scale reflect perception of parents as neglecting and rejecting, while high scores above the mean value indicate perception of parents as warm and understanding. High scores above the mean value on the paternal/maternal protection scale suggest excessive parental control and intrusion, while low scores below the mean suggest parental acceptance of the respondents' independence and autonomy. In the present study, the PBI was found to have high internal consistency for all four dimensions: care dimension (mother:  $\alpha = .83$ ; father:  $\alpha = .86$ ), protection dimension (mother:  $\alpha = .91$ ; father:  $\alpha = .78$ ).

**Aggressive Behaviour (AB).** The Aggression Questionnaire (AQ; Buss, 2000) [70] was used to measure the self-reported tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour. This scale consists of 34-items that measures individual's propensity to commit aggressive acts, both of physical and verbal nature. AQ is rated on a 5-point (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). Score on the scale is continuous, so that high score above the mean value reflects more tendencies to perpetrate aggressive behaviour, while low score below the mean value indicates fewer tendencies to perpetrate aggressive behaviour. The researchers obtained a validity coefficient of .74 in the present study.

### D. Procedure

Data for this research were collected as part of a larger study of behavioural problems in adolescence. Through a list of all public secondary schools available at the Ministry of Education, Ogun State, pre-contacts were made with several public schools selected at random using even method. Eight schools finally participated in the study based primarily on their availability and the willingness of the school authorities to collaborate with the researchers. Following initial contact with principals and vice-principals of selected schools, teaching staff at various schools were informed of the objectives of the study. The permission of parents was obtained through passive informed consents through the teachers. Students provided active informed consents by agreeing to complete research instrument. Participation was voluntary and participants were informed that they were free to discontinue with the research at any point if they felt uncomfortable in the course of the research. They were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. To further conceal the identity of the participants, they were not requested to indicate their names in the questionnaire. Apart from that, the participants were assured that their responses could not be traced to them. Both teachers and students expressed a wish to be informed about the results of the investigation in a meeting with the research team; this took place when data analyses were completed. Participants anonymously filled out the scales during break period, lasting approximately 15 minutes. All measures were administered within each classroom on the same day a particular school was visited. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed while 280 questionnaires were returned. This yielded 88% response rate. Only 250 questionnaires were duly completed and found usable for data analysis using SPSS Version 17.

### E. Data Analysis

The study proposed a significant influence of parental bonding on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour, so that students who perceive their parents as caring will report fewer tendencies to perpetrate aggressive behaviour compared to students who perceive their parents as overprotective. One Way ANOVA was employed to test the proposition. This was selected to find out if the aggressive behaviour score would differ among respondents with different perceptions of parental bonding.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examined the influence of parental bonding on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour among some secondary school students in Nigeria. The influence was assessed via a self-report measure. The result is presented in Table I.

TABLE I ANOVA TEST FOR DIFFERING PARENTAL BONDING ON AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between	22883.691	3	11441.845	71.361	< .01
Within	39603.413	246	160.338		
Total	62487.104	249			

### A. Test of Hypothesis

The results showed statistically significant influence of parental bonding on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour among respondents ( $F = 71.361$ ,  $df = 3,249$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). In other words, students who perceived their parents as caring or overprotective reported statistically significant different levels of tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour. However, where the difference lies is not visible from the summary of ANOVA results.

To detect where the difference actually lies, Least Significant Difference (LSD) Post hoc test, statistically significant at  $p < .05$  was performed. The results of the multiple comparisons analysis are presented in Table II.

TABLE II MULTIPLE COMPARISONS SHOWING THE DIRECTION OF PARENTAL BONDING

(I) PB	(J) PB	Mean Diff (I-J)	Std Error	Sig	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PC	PP	1.26163*	.62555	.045	.0304	2.4928
	MC	-.38889	1.61355	.810	-3.5647	2.7870
	MP	5.11111*	2.25168	.024	.6793	9.5429
PP	PC	-1.26163*	.62555	.045	-2.4928	-.0304
	MC	-1.65052	1.64948	.318	-4.8971	1.5961
	MP	3.84948	2.27757	.092	-.6333	8.3323
MC	PC	.38889	1.61355	.810	-2.7870	3.5647
	PP	1.65052	1.64948	.318	-1.5961	4.8971
	MP	5.50000*	2.72021	.044	.1460	10.8540
MP	PC	-5.11111*	2.25168	.024	-9.5429	-.6793
	PP	-3.84948	2.27757	.092	-8.3323	.6333
	MC	-5.50000*	2.72021	.044	-10.8540	-.1460

\* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Key: PB =parental bonding, PC =paternal care, PP= paternal protection, MC= maternal care, MP=maternal protection

The results revealed that students who perceived their fathers as caring ( $M = 18.65$ ,  $SD = 5.52$ ) had lower mean score on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour compared to students who perceived their fathers as overprotective ( $M = 19.91$ ,  $SD = 4.65$ ), and students who perceived their mothers as overprotective ( $M = 20.30$ ,  $SD = 3.20$ ) respectively. This indicates that the more care is shown to the adolescents by their fathers, the less their tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour. However, the mean differences of students who perceived their fathers as caring ( $M = 18.65$ ,  $SD = 5.52$ ) and those who perceived their mothers as caring ( $M = 14.80$ ,  $SD = 7.43$ ) were not statistically significant. Further results indicated no significant mean difference between students who perceived their fathers as overprotective ( $M = 19.91$ ,  $SD = 4.65$ ) and their mothers as caring ( $M = 14.80$ ,  $SD = 7.43$ ). Similarly, there were no significant mean differences between students who perceived their fathers as overprotective ( $M = 19.91$ ,  $SD = 4.65$ ) and their mothers as overprotective ( $M = 20.30$ ,  $SD = 3.20$ ). The results indicated that tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour could occur among any of the students who perceived their parents as showing paternal overprotection or maternal overprotection.

In contrast, results showed that students who perceived their mothers as caring ( $M = 14.80$ ,  $SD = 7.43$ ) reported lower mean score on aggressive tendency compared to those who perceived their mothers as overprotective ( $M = 20.30$ ,  $SD = 3.20$ ). Lastly, the mean differences on aggressive tendency were not statistically significant for students who perceived their mothers as overprotective ( $M = 20.30$ ,  $SD = 3.20$ ) and those who perceived their fathers as overprotective ( $M = 19.91$ ,  $SD = 4.65$ ), indicating that aggressive tendency could occur among any of the pair. In summary, the overall mean score on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour is ( $M = 19.42$ ,  $SD = 5.02$ ), when compared with score of students who perceived their mothers as overprotective ( $M = 20.30$ ,  $SD = 3.20$ ), the score of those who perceived their fathers as overprotective ( $M = 19.42$ ,  $SD = 5.02$ ), the score of those who perceived their fathers as caring ( $M = 18.65$ ,  $SD = 5.52$ ), and the score of those who perceived their mothers as caring ( $M = 14.80$ ,  $SD = 7.43$ ) respectively, then it can be concluded that those students who perceived their parents as caring reported fewer tendencies to perpetrate aggressive acts. Therefore, the study hypothesis was supported.

The findings of this study show a statistically significant influence of parental bonding on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive acts on others. The findings suggest that students who perceived their fathers and mothers as manifesting paternal or maternal care reported lower levels of tendencies to perpetrate aggression. In other words, the greater the amount of care showed by the fathers and mothers, the less the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour. This could be because in most African societies, parents, particularly the father is seen as authority and disciplinary figure, and the amount of care and attention shown by the father is expected to militate against the tendency of the child to misbehave. Previous findings have



suggested that inadequate parental bonding is related to psychosocial and behavioural problems in the adolescent period. The results in this study thus in fact supports previous findings (see [42-45, 50-52, 70]). Surprisingly, in this study, students who perceive paternal and maternal care were found to report low levels of aggressive tendencies. This is contrary to stereotypical belief in most Nigerian homes where father is regarded as the head of the family while the mother is perceived as playing a more background role, hence father compared to mother is expected to play more serious and disciplinary role in adolescent development. Nevertheless, it should be noted that when both parents care for the adolescent, this could have a significant impact on adolescent's discipline.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

This study found some evidence for the influence of perceptions of parental bonding on tendency to perpetrate aggressive acts among respondents in the study. First, students who perceived their fathers as caring had lower mean score on tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour compared to students who perceived their fathers as overprotective, and those who perceived their mothers as overprotective respectively.

Secondly, students who perceived their parents as caring were not different on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour, meaning they reported fewer tendencies to perpetrate aggressive acts. Similarly, there was no significant difference on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour between students who perceived their fathers as overprotective and their mothers as caring. Also, no significant difference exists on tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour between students who perceived their parents as overprotective.

Thirdly, students who perceived their mothers as caring reported fewer tendencies to perpetrate aggressive behaviour compared to their counterparts who perceived their mothers as overprotective. Lastly, there was no significant difference on tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour between students who perceived their parents as overprotective. It can, therefore, be concluded that tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour is more pronounced among secondary school students who perceived their parents as having excessive control over them.

### A. Implications and Recommendations

The findings implicated the quality of parental attachment as a factor in aggressive tendency among secondary school students. The results from this study suggest to the public the importance of parental bonding in behavioural problems of children. The findings also imply that both fathers and mothers should play greater roles in children care, by creating a sense of connectedness between them and their wards, discussing and spending more time with them to reduce their tendencies to inflict harm on their peers. Findings also imply that more research is required to further explore parental bonding and other psychological and cultural variables as predictors of aggressive tendency among secondary school students.

Lastly, findings have implications for the development of aggression prevention modules for secondary school students in Nigeria and other setting sharing similar characteristics with Nigeria. In this regard, the social cognitive theory (SCT) [11] is a useful behaviour change theory upon which to base aggression preventive interventions that would involve both the adolescent and their parents. Reciprocal determinism, a guiding principle of SCT, indicates that aggressive behaviour is determined by an interaction between the adolescent, her behaviour, and his or her environment. Therefore, recommended interventions are those which incorporate components that address the influence of other environmental influences on the tendency to perpetrate aggressive behaviour. Such interventions should focus on helping parents to deter their children's involvement in aggression. Strengthening parents' behavioural capabilities through knowledge and skill building is a crucial intervention component.

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